

Israeli soldiers kill two Palestinians

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinian youths in a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank Monday. Palestinian sources said. Residents of Balata camp began throwing stones at troops after word spread that a youth from there had been run down and killed by a military vehicle in the nearby town of Nablus. The soldiers responded with gunfire, killing Iyman Suleiman Al Thalaj and Mohammad Shehadeh Al Mughrabi, both 19. Three other residents were wounded, Palestinians said. The army said it was checking the report. Hospital sources said the boy hit by the military vehicle was treated and discharged in good health. Palestinians said Mughrabi, who was killed, was a dancer who headed an Arab folkloric troupe in the camp.

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Exiles delay march

MARJ AL ZOHOUR (R) — Palestinian expellees postponed a march by some 700 exiles towards Israeli lines in southern Lebanon Monday due to mounting military tension in the area. Abdul Aziz Al Rantisi, leader of 395 exiles languishing at a tent camp, said the sick and their exile doctors would set a new date for their march towards a crossing into Israel's self-styled "security zone."

'Iran may possess U.S. cruise missile'

NEW YORK (R) — Iran may possess an unexploded U.S. cruise missile, one of several fired at an Iraqi industrial site in January, Newsweek magazine reported. The magazine, in its July 19 issue, said the missile, like similar ones fired at the Iraqi intelligence headquarters last month, travelled a course over Iran. Cruise missiles are programmed to fly by visual landmarks. But the land over southeastern Iraq is flat marshland with no landscape features to lock on to. Newsweek said the cruise missiles were programmed to fly up the spine of Iran's Zagros mountains just east of the Iraqi border. After 400 kilometres, the missiles swung south-westward down the Diyala river to Baghdad.

Hekmatyar meets rival warlord

KABUL (R) — Afghan Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar held his first meeting on Monday with General Abdul Rashid Dostum, the country's most powerful warlord and one of Mr. Hekmatyar's most bitter enemies in the 14-year civil war. "The meeting was held in a friendly atmosphere," Gen. Dostum told reporters after the two-hour meeting at a base held by Mr. Hekmatyar's hardline Hezb-e-Islami party in the southwestern suburbs of the capital Kabul. Mr. Hekmatyar still refused to speak after his first talks with the former communist general whose defection to the guerrillas precipitated the fall of President Najibullah and the guerrilla takeover in April 1992. "They discussed the permanent end to the war in Ka," one of Gen. Dostum's aides said after the meeting.

Protesters demand sheikh's release

NEW YORK (AP) — Chanting "free the sheikh" and "Justice now," dozens of supporters of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman demonstrated in Lower Manhattan to demand the Egyptian cleric's release from a federal prison. The sheikh was detained July 2 on immigration charges. The sheikh's supporters demonstrated Sunday in front of a federal office building in Lower Manhattan that houses the local office Federal Bureau of Investigations.

Moroccan leader union leader freed

RABAT (AFP) — Trade union leader Nourib Amaoui, serving a two-year term for insulting members of the government, was freed Monday after a royal pardon, an authoritative source said. Mr. Amaoui, who had served a year and 36 days of the sentence, was not met by anybody as he left the Sale prison near Rabat, since his family and friends did not appear to have informed, a source close to prison authorities said. The general secretary of the opposition Democracy Labour Confederation (CDT) and member of the political bureau of the Socialist Union of People's Forces (USFP) was released on orders of King Hassan II.

Shell kills 12 in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (AP) — A shell reportedly killed 12 people lining up for water Monday as a water shortage in the Bosnian capital increased the threat of disease. The last major source of drinking water on Sarajevo was cut over the weekend. But Bosnia's Muslim president and the leader of Bosnian Serbs signed an agreement Monday that could restore utilities to the desperate city. Bosnian radio quoted the Bosnian army as saying 12 people were killed and 15 wounded at a water tap when a shell exploded in the suburb of Dobrinja, near the city's airport.

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN —

Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Monday decided to set up six technical committees to deal with various aspects of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation in what was seen as the first tangible step towards a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation.

A joint Jordanian-Palestinian higher committee, meeting for the first time since its establishment last month during a visit here of Palestine leader Yasser Arafat, took the decision to establish the committees, which will be in charge of cooperation in affairs related to Jerusalem, refugees and displaced persons, borders and security, water, economic cooperation and legal issues.

The two parties have agreed on establishing continued dialogue and to discuss the future relations between the two nations and the necessity for a concentrated effort to achieve a just and comprehensive and permanent peace which will guarantee the full rights of the Palestinian people, particularly in the field of self-determination of the Palestinian people on their land," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

"The two parties have agreed on establishing continued dialogue and to discuss the future relations between the two nations and the necessity for a concentrated effort to achieve a just and comprehensive and permanent peace which will guarantee the full rights of the Palestinian people, particularly in the field of self-determination of the Palestinian people on their land," Dr. Abu Nowar said.

The meeting came less than six hours before Denis Ross, special U.S. coordinator for the Middle East peace talks, was due in Amman to discuss the future of the peace talks with Jordanian officials.

A Foreign Ministry official said the fact that the Jerusalem committee headed the list of six committees formed was a message to the visiting American official that the issue of Jerusalem cannot be sidetracked if the peace process is to succeed.

An official quoted by Reuters said that through the technical committees, "we hope to lay the foundations for a future house (confederation), and in the mean-

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Jordan, PLO set up panels on cooperation ahead of confederation

In addition to agreeing to set up the six technical committees, the meeting also decided to create operations committee and an information coordinating committee.

"There will be many common concerns and issues once Palestinians begin ruling themselves because Jordan, which once ruled the now-occupied territories, has intimate knowledge about many of these matters," said the government official.

"But joint economic, administrative and security issues are also part and package of this dialogue," added the official.

The Jordanian side of the committee includes: Minister of Information Maan Abu Nowar, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Mahdi Farhan and Minister of Water and Irrigation Bassam Kakish.

The Palestinian side of the committee is led by PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas, and includes fellow executives Yasser Abd Rabbo and Yasser Amer. Overall head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks Faisal Al Husseini and Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayeb Abdul Rahim are also members of the committee.

His Majesty King Hussein and Mr. Arafat co-chair the joint higher committee.

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Monday confers with Washington's Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross (second from right) and Assistant Secretary of State Edward Djerejian (to Mr. Ross' right) in a meeting attended by Prime Minister Abdurrahman Majali (third from right) and Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki (Petra photo).

Ross holds talks in Amman, says tour saw serious desire for peace

Jordan suggests direct PLO role; U.S. wants Palestinians to accept its proposal

By Wafa Amr
Special to the Jordan Times

Al Majali and other Jordanian officials.

AMMAN — U.S. Mideast peace coordinator Dennis Ross said after talks with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Jordanian officials Monday that his regional tour revealed that all parties involved in Arab-Israeli peace negotiations were serious to advance the peace process.

"The discussions are revealing one thing that is important," Mr. Ross said. "It is that all parties are quite serious and if we are going to make progress, we are going to make progress because all the parties are serious to make that progress."

The U.S. envoy told reporters that his discussions in the region "are beginning to help us move ahead and we still have a long way to go."

Mr. Ross departed for Israel for a second time during his peace shuttle in the region. His regional tour also included Egypt, Syria and Jordan in an attempt to revive the stalled peace negotiations after the 10th round of talks ended with no tangible progress.

During a brief visit to Jordan, the U.S. peace team met separately with Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdurrahman Majali prior to his talks with Mr. Ross, said they asked Jordan to convey the Palestinian position on a U.S. draft proposal on Palestinian interim self-government in the occupied territories. They said they also wanted Jordan to stress that the peace process had reached a stage where the direct involvement of the PLO in the peace talks would advance the process.

The PLO directs the Palestinian delegation in the peace process, but the U.S. and Israel refuse to open direct dialogue with the organization.

During a separate meeting at the Prime Ministry immediately upon Mr. Ross' arrival from Damascus, Dr. Majali stressed Jordan's commitment to achieving just and comprehensive settlements in all tracks of negotiations with Israel, Petra said.

It said the prime minister told the visiting U.S. officials that the peace process would gain new impetus with the participation of Palestinians, not only through coordination with the Palestine

Liberation Organisation (PLO), but also through a direct role for the PLO in the peace talks since it is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

PLO officials, who met with Mr. Majali prior to his talks with Mr. Ross, said they asked Jordan to convey the Palestinian position on a U.S. draft proposal on Palestinian interim self-government in the occupied territories. They said they also wanted Jordan to stress that the peace process had reached a stage where the direct involvement of the PLO in the peace talks would advance the process.

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A Western diplomat said that circles in the U.S. Administration believed that the PLO was obstructing progress in the Palestinian-Israeli track of negotiations because it wanted to be directly involved in the peace process. But PLO officials said that the rounds of peace talks did not make progress because of Israeli intransigence and recently because the U.S. presented a draft proposal on interim self-government arrangements that

(Continued on page 10)

Iraqis brace for new strike

Combined agency despatches

BAGHDAD — Iraq accused senior U.N. officials Monday of engineering a dispute over missile testing to set it up for a fresh U.S.-led military strike and Iraqis prepared for the worst.

Hundreds of chanting demonstrators turned out for what has become a daily protest outside U.N. offices in Baghdad during the standoff over the monitoring of missile tests allowed under the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire.

At the United Nations, the five permanent Security Council members' meeting Monday in the wake of Iraq's latest refusal to allow U.N. weapons inspectors to seal test missile sites near Baghdad,

Diplomats said the meeting involving Britain, France, China, Russia and the United States could authorize a trip by Rolf Ekeus, who heads the commission supervising Iraqi disarmament, to Baghdad in an effort to persuade authorities to comply with U.N. demands.

China distanced itself from talk of a possible strike against Iraq.

A Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman called for all of the Security Council's resolutions on Iraq to be carried out fully.

"We are of the view that the relevant resolutions of the U.N. Security Council should be implemented comprehensively and effectively," she said.

"As for problems that have occurred ... we hope that the parties concerned will seek to settle them through consultation and dialogue."

Despite the tensions, Iraqi delegates met with U.N. officials Monday morning to discuss a proposed one-time sale of oil that would enable Baghdad to buy food and humanitarian supplies.

"It is a matter we are following closely, but we must remember that it is the United Nations that will determine the action it judges necessary (to take against Iraq)," said French foreign ministry spokeswoman Catherine Colonna.

Iraqis stocked up on supplies and holed up at home.

Lebanon: Peace depends on Israeli pullout from south

Combined agency despatches

BEIRUT — Chief Lebanese peace negotiator Suhail Shammam said Monday peace in southern Lebanon could only be restored after all Israeli troops withdraw from the region.

Israel has threatened to carry out punitive strikes in Lebanon after anti-Israeli guerrillas killed five Israeli soldiers on Thursday and Friday.

On Sunday the Israeli cabinet reviewed options to halt attacks by Palestinian and Lebanese resistance fighters who allegedly receive arms from Iran via Damascus. Officials said ministers postponed any decision.

Mr. Ross met Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on Monday before flying on to Jordan in a bid to narrow differences between Israel and the Arabs on the Middle East peace talks. After Amman he returned to occupied Jerusalem.

"The restraint and patience which we have manifested for many months is reaching its limits."

Mr. Shammam said in response to Mr. Lubrani's statement: "We have told the Israelis more than once that they should avoid flexing their muscles."

He warned that an escalation in

southern Lebanon would lead to a "catastrophe."

"Calm and security in South Lebanon depend foremost and only on an Israeli withdrawal from international borders," Mr. Shammam added.

Israel moved artillery and troop reinforcements into the buffer or "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

A Hezbollah official told Israel to avoid taking "foolish action" to avenge last week's killings.

Hussein Al Khalil, head of Hezbollah's political bureau, was quoted in a statement Sunday as saying the group was "ready to open the whole front and cross all political and geographic borders."

Guerrillas went on alert across Lebanon after Palestinian fighters killed two Israeli soldiers and wounded three in an ambush on Thursday and Hezbollah militants killed three and wounded five Friday.

Hezbollah-run Voice of the Oppressed radio said Mr. Khalil also urged the Lebanese government to order its army to support guerrilla raids against Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon held by Israeli troops.

Israeli planes staged mock air raids over South Lebanon and

the suburb of Dabiq, near the city's airport.

U.N. blasts Aideed base; mobs kill two journalists

Combined agency despatches

MOGADISHU — U.S. helicopters killed at least 30 people when they rocketed a meeting of aides of Somalia's main warlord on Monday, hospital sources said, sparking the revenge killing of two foreign journalists with two more missing, feared dead.

A military source in the U.N. Operation in Somalia (UNISOM II) said a target of the raid was a house where leading members of Mohammed Farah Aideed's Somaliland National Alliance-Somali Congress (SNA-USC) met regularly.

The aim was to "decapitate" General Aideed's faction, smash the command and control capability of the SNA-USC and punish recent attacks on U.N. peacekeeping forces, the U.N. source said.

Gen. Aideed himself was not present during the raid by American Cobra gunships armed with missiles and machine-guns, the spokesman added. The aircraft also attacked the headquarters of the USC.

Initial UNISOM figures put the death toll at 13 with around 15 wounded, a U.N. spokesman said, adding that the casualty figures could rise.

After the raid, an angry mob at the scene killed German photographer Hans Kraus, who worked for the Associated Press (AP) news agency and Reuters photographer Don Eldon, 22. Two other journalists were missing, feared killed by Somalis armed with stones and guns. It named them as Anthony Macartha and Hosea Maina, special envoys sent from Nairobi.

In a statement issued hours after Monday's attack, Defence Minister Fabio Fabbri said the mission was in danger of turning into "a long period of conflict."

"A choice of this nature, with its extremely high risk, indeed certainty, that human lives will be lost is shared neither by public

opinion nor by parliament in our country," Mr. Fabbri said in the statement.

"We should say that to the United Nations and to the USA with loyalty and clarity," he said.

Hospital sources in Mogadishu said 30 bodies had been brought in during the day, and that medical staff were treating 85 wounded people, including five children and eight women.

Aided supporters brought 16 men in a lorry and two pick-up trucks to a hotel where international journalists are staying, and said 29 people had died in the operation.

But Gen. Aideed's spokesman, Hussein Dhibil, said 70 people had been killed in the rocket attack on the home of Gen. Aideed's "interior minister," Abdi Mohammad Awale, near the Digir hospital.

In London the SNA said 100 people had died in the U.N. attack, and vowed to fight on until all U.N. troops had left the country.

The SNA would "continue our struggle until we see that last U.N. colonial soldiers leave Somalia," the statement said.

Describing the UNISOM raid in Mogadishu Monday as "barbaric and cowardly," the statement said the attack had "brought an end to any hope of bringing back stability to Mogadishu."

"We are no longer committed to talking to UNISOM officers," the statement added, accusing U.S. troops of aiming to "continue with their mass genocide and massacre of the Somali people."

"I appealed for a meeting (with Mr. Fabbri) to make an honourable peace ... and I have renewed the appeal last month at the Organisation of African Unity summit (OAU)," in Cairo, he said.

Middle East News

Yemen is fighting a losing battle against locusts

By Habib Trabelsi
Agence France Presse

MANAMA — Impoverished Yemen is fighting a losing battle against a plague of locusts that has swept in from the Horn of Africa, and Saudi Arabia and cover more than a fifth of its territory.

"The situation is hopeless," said Mohammad Al Ghashem, head of the Agriculture Ministry's crisis department which is working around the clock trying to contain the infestation.

"The government and air force are on alert. We've been able to clear more than 100,000 hectares, but more than a fifth of our entire country is infested by locusts," he told AFP by telephone.

In Rome, the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) confirmed that Yemen was facing a tough problem and said it lacked the funds to deal with it. A meeting between FAO and donor countries would be held soon to find a solution, a spokesman said.

"Swarms have been signalled in central Yemen and in the northern mountains," said Max de Montaigne, an expert at the FAO's emergency centre for locust operations.

But he said it was difficult to

track down the number of crickets plaguing Yemen because of their mobility.

Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti were also stricken and a swarm was seen heading toward Oman on June 4, he said.

In Yemen, the plague stretches from Saada, on the border with Saudi Arabia, to Hadramaut, an area of more than half a million square kilometres.

"Every day the north wind brings in swarms of tens of millions of locusts from Saudi Arabia," Mr. Ghashem said.

"They are concentrated for now in central desert regions but are beginning to spread to the fertile coastal areas, where the rainy season, which spurs their reproduction, was unusually long this year."

Mr. Ghashem said conflicts in the adjacent Horn of Africa were preventing countries there from fighting the plague.

"We have the manpower capable of tackling this but we don't have the necessary equipment, particularly helicopters able to spray in remote areas," he added.

He criticised fellow Arab countries and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development for failing to help, singling out the Saudi authorities, who "have not even sent

one helicopter because they think it's nothing to do with them."

Saudi radio, however, occasionally issues warnings to its populace about the danger of eating insects contaminated with pesticide.

Saudi Arabia cut off all aid to Yemen and expelled 800,000 of its workers because of its alleged support for Iraq during its occupation of Kuwait.

Germany has given aid of \$300,000 plus a helicopter and 10 tonnes of pesticide. The European Community has promised help "but it is slow in coming," Mr. Ghashem said.

FAO has sent two experts, an American and Tunisian who have been involved in the eradication campaign for several weeks.

In the past, Yemenis managed to deal with locusts by collecting them in bags and eating them, but there are too many this time," Mr. Ghashem said.

The FAO warned last month that single swarms in eastern Africa could cover 1,000 square kilometres destroying all crops in their path.

Yemen, which lies on the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is one of the world's poorest countries.

Shot twice, TV man escapes Somali mobs

MOGADISHU (R) — A Somali gunman shot Reuters Television cameraman Mohammad Shaffi twice Monday when he tried to visit the scene of a U.S. helicopter gunship attack on a suspected nerve centre of warlord Mohamad Farah Aideed.

Bleeding and beaten, he got up and ran to safety.

"I said, 'sh! This guy is gonna kill me but I'm not gonna die on the ground,'" a shaken Shaffi said after his discharge from a U.S. military hospital with gunshot wounds.

"So I got up and ran. I just kept running. I saw a pick-up truck in front of me so I dived into the back," said Mr. Shaffi, who was treated for a wound to the head and one to the ear on the day when Somalis turned their anger on the Western media.

Reuters photographer Dan Eldon was beaten to death while another Reuters photographer and a Reuters Television soundman were missing and presumed dead after the attack, latest raid on property associated with General Aideed.

Witnesses said they saw Mr. Eldon inside the bombed compound being stoned by a mob.

Mr. Macharia had already fled the building when it happened but more crowds were outside.

A German photographer working for the U.S. Associated Press news agency was also reported dead by Somalis who knew him. They said his body was close to the bombed compound but angry Somalis would not let anyone approach to retrieve it.

Later Somalis brought the bodies of 16 Somalis, one a woman, to the Hotel Sahafi, covered in sheets and flies.

They said there were 29 bodies altogether although an Aideed aide, Mohammad Dimble, told journalists that 74 people were killed in the attack and 200 were wounded.

It was impossible to verify this or other casualty claims because Somalis prevented journalists from reaching the city's Benadir and Digfer hospitals.

"Don't go, don't try to get in, they'll kill you in there," one Somali known to Reuters told journalists who tried to get into the grounds.

Mr. Shaffi was trying to film the house of Abdi Abdik, interior secretary in Gen. Aideed's so-called inner cabinet. Aideed aides say it was the command centre for his movement.

It was a typical Mogadishu house on two stores with a turret and one corner which concealed a stairway to the roof where Somalis traditionally spend the cool of the evening.

Smoke still billowed from the house hours after the attack but angry mobs prevented journalists from revisiting it.

Cobra gunships, their noses dipped like venomous dragonflies, fired prolonged bursts of cannon fire at the building even while it was burning.

Three Cobras took part in the attack and returned repeatedly to strafe it and fire anti-tank TOW missiles, witnesses said.

UAE has territorial waters law

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates for the first time is defining its territorial waters in the Gulf, a strategic waterway rich in oil and dotted with islands which have been a source of dispute for more than a year.

The UAE cabinet last week passed its first federal draft law on sea boundaries which expands jurisdiction over marine zones, government sources said.

The UAE joins Oman, Bahrain, Qatar and Iran which have over the past few months issued laws defining their territorial and other sea limits.

The UAE and Iran have struggled since last year over control of three strategic Gulf islands.

"The previous territorial waters were based on a canon shot," one port official said Monday.

"It fills a legal vacuum. There is now one law for all emirates fixing limits for the marine zone," a UAE government advisor told Reuters.

The draft must be approved by the UAE's consultative council and the rulers of each of the seven emirates and issued in a decree by President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan.

It sets the UAE's territorial waters at 12 nautical miles and its contiguous zone at 24 nautical miles.

It also defines an exclusive economic zone in which the UAE has jurisdiction over marine and oil resources up to 200 nautical miles.

"In the contiguous zone ... we can combat illegal immigration, smuggling and apply health laws," he said. "In the territorial waters ship have to establish their innocent passage."

UAE port officials trying to prevent tankers from flushing oil sludge into the Gulf, said the law brings UAE territorial waters closer to its ports channels which start at 12.5 nautical miles.

Previously, territorial waters of six emirates were based on customary limits of three nautical miles, while Sharjah's territorial waters were fixed by ruler's decree at 12 nautical miles in the early 1970s, the adviser said.

The UAE and Iran since last year have tussled over sovereignty of Abu Musa Island which they jointly controlled since 1972. The UAE has reasserted its claims to two islands controlled by Iran, the Greater and Lesser Tubs.

Abu Musa Island lies about 35 nautical miles from the UAE mainland while the Tubs are very close to the Iranian coast.

Lawyers and oil officials said they did not expect the draft law to affect offshore fields in the UAE.

Maps show current boundaries enclosing the UAE's two main offshore fields and cutting through Al Burdah, an oilfield the UAE shares with Qatar.

Qatar and Iran said Sunday closer Gulf ties were the cornerstone for achieving stability and security in the oil-rich region.

A joint statement by the two stressed the need for boosting "brotherly" cooperation between Iran and the six-county Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"This is the cornerstone which (regional states) cannot do without to guarantee their security and stability," said the joint statement which was carried by the Qatari news agency.

The two Gulf neighbours issued the statement at the end of the two days of talks in Tehran between Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jaber Al Thani, and Iranian leaders.

They also said regional ties should be based on the principles that no state interfere in the internal affairs of its neighbours and that territorial disputes be resolved through dialogue.

Qatar and Iran "stress the need for regional states to achieve security and stability on the basis of mutual respect, the respect of sovereignty rights and independence," the statement added.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Swiss reject Turkish negligence charge

BERNE (R) — Switzerland Monday rejected Turkish accusations of negligence over the policing of Kurdish demonstrations at the Turkish embassy in Berne last month during which a Kurd was killed. Turkey Friday said Switzerland had infringed international agreements by failing to send police to the embassy in time to control the demonstration. The Swiss foreign ministry on Monday issued a statement denying any delay in sending in police. "We point out once more that the police, once alerted... arrived at the scene in the shortest of time," the statement said. The June 24 demonstration set off a diplomatic dispute between Turkey and Switzerland, which has accused Ankara of failing to cooperate with its inquiries into the killing.

Israel and Vietnam establish ties

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel Monday established diplomatic relations with Vietnam, which joined a growing list of countries that think the road to Washington runs through Israel, radio reports said. Israel's deputy foreign minister, Yossi Beilin, signed an agreement with its Vietnamese counterpart, Nguyen dy Nien at a Jerusalem hotel, army radio said. Vietnam joins other ostracised nations like North Korea and Libya that in recent months have made gestures toward Israel, perceiving it has a means of rapprochement with Washington. "I think Israel has many friends in the United States is very, very strong," Mr. Nguyen told Israel radio. Israel has never had ties with any Vietnamese government. Both countries have hosted trade delegations in recent months in anticipation of the establishment of relations.

Blast kills 3 Lebanese soldiers on hunt

BEIRUT (R) — Three Lebanese soldiers hunting for rabbits were killed and an officer was wounded when a landmine exploded near their vehicle in northern Lebanon, the army said on Monday. Military sources said the mine exploded near the mountain village of Akoura, 45 kilometres northwest of Beirut, late on Sunday when the four-wheel-drive vehicle hit it during the hunt. They said the mine was on a former frontline and was left over from Lebanon's 15-year civil war, which ended in 1990.

Kuwait denies abuse charges by maids

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait denies allegations of abuse made against employers of Filipina domestic workers, a government minister said in remarks published Monday. Kuwait respected the rights of all residents including expatriate labourers, Cabinet Affairs Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dakhil was quoted as saying by Al Watan newspaper. Al Watan said he was responding to a Reuter report on Sunday which quoted Filipina maids as saying on their return to Manila that they had been beaten or raped by employers. Kuwait President Fidel Ramos Sunday ordered the Philippine foreign office to investigate the accusations. The maids were among about 400 who have returned home in groups in recent weeks under a Kuwaiti-funded repatriation scheme. The 400 had alleged mistreatment by employers. The newspaper said Mr. Dakhil strongly denied the Reuter report about mistreatment of Filipinas in Kuwait. "Kuwait is extremely anxious to respect the human rights of all people living in Kuwait," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

Israeli prosecutor sacked over political outburst

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Justice Minister David Libai sacked Monday a deputy state prosecutor known for her far-right-wing views after she questioned a left-wing parliamentarian's allegiance to Israel. Mr. Libai described as "inadmissible" a statement from Pia Albeck casting doubts on the loyalty of Meretz's Chaim Oron who backs an independent Palestinian state in the occupied territories. Ms. Albeck said: "Mr. Oron does not seem to understand that as an MP he owes allegiance to the state of Israel." Mr. Oron has not forward a bill calling for Palestinian victims of "terror attack" to receive the same compensation as Israelis. Two years ago Ms. Albeck pleaded in a Tel Aviv court against compensation for a Palestinian whose wife was mistakenly shot dead by the army. The deputy prosecutor alleged her death saved the husband money because he no longer had to support a wife. Ms. Albeck hit the headlines again last year when she appealed against compensation granted to a Palestinian who lost both hands when the army ordered him to take a Palestinian flag off electricity wires.

Children die as scorpions invade Iranian village

TEHRAN (AFP) — Black scorpions have infested a village in central Iran, killing two children and biting 20 others, Salam newspaper reported Monday. The panic-stricken residents of Deil in the region of Gachsan appealed to authorities for "quick action" to exterminate the scorpions. They said the number of scorpions in the village have sharply increased because buildings had not been sprayed for three years. Many areas in southern and central Iran are breeding grounds for scorpions.

Iranians bound for Japan caught in Far East

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian border guards in the Far East port of Nakhodka have caught seven Iranians on board a cruise ship bound for Japan, ITAR-TASS reported Monday. The seven men travelled from Azerbaijan and Georgia carrying Ukrainian visas and were given safe passage to the Far East with the "cooperation of several Russian government departments," the news agency said. Captain Nikolai Malign of the ocean liner Petropavlovsk-Kamchatski, owned by the navigation company of Kamchatski, said he had received a telegram from the head offices of the company instructing him to take the seven men on board as seamen. Mr. Malign did so although none of the seven asylum-seekers spoke a word of Russian, according to the report which did not specify when the incident occurred.

Djibouti releases Frenchwomen

PARIS (R) — Djibouti has released two Frenchwomen, one of whom 72 years old, who were accused of supporting rebel forces. France said Monday, "Helene Ascue, 72, and Dalia Assasi, 26, were handed over to our consul-general in Djibouti as a result of a decision by the Djibouti authorities which we welcome," a French foreign ministry spokeswoman said. The ministry said at the weekend it was told by Djibouti, a former French colony, that the women were captured in military operations against rebel forces.

Iran reports Iraqi refugee flood

NICOSIA (Agencies) — More than 2,000 Iraqi Shi'ite Muslims have fled to Iran following fresh attacks by Iraqi government forces in southern Iraq. Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Monday.

The agency, monitored in Nicosia, said 2,147 refugees from Basra, Amara and Nasiriyah had crossed into Iran's Khuzestan province over the past few days and were settled in refugee camps there.

IRNA quoted them as saying the army attacks had raised tension in Iraq's southern cities.

Hundreds of Iraqi Shi'ites fled to Iran in the wake of their failed revolt against the government in March 1991. Most are housed in refugee camps along the border.

There are no independent estimates available on the number of Iraqi refugees in the camps.

Last year, Iraqi forces pushed into the southern cities and near marshes where thousands of

refugees and rebels had been hiding.

Iraq has denied Iranian reports of a new onslaught in the south. U.S.-led Western forces have been enforcing a "no-fly" zone in southern Iraq since last August to protect Shi'ites from the Iraqi air force. They have reported no new attacks by the Iraqis.

An Iraqi opposition movement said Iraqi government troops were continuing to shell the country's southern marshlands, home to thousands of Shi'ite Muslims.

The shelling of Al Amara and Basra regions is being carried out while the population of these regions suffer from shortages of the food and medicines," the Iranian-based Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIIR) said in a statement released here.

SCIIR also called on Iraqis living abroad as well as all Muslims to help the marshlands people, who it said were victims of Iraqi army attacks.

Sudan blends Islamic revolution and African roots

By Job: West Reuter

KHARTOUM — When the army seized power in Sudan in 1989 and handed it to ideologues who declared an Islamic revolution, shocked Western and secular Arab powers prepared to deal with an Arab Iran.

Four years later, there has been no shortage of political conflict between Khartoum's rulers and their ideological foes abroad. But at home, this huge African country still feels anything but a puritanical Muslim society.

Most women dress as they always did. They cover their arms, legs and hair but they do it with loose, brightly coloured shawls, quite unlike the heavy black or grey chadors worn by Iranian fundamentalists and their admirers in the Arab World. Few women cover their faces.

Sudan's legal system applies traditional Islamic law. But unlike Pakistan or most of the Gulf countries, the Koranic punishment of amputation for theft has not been used.

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 *Omniscenes*, Comedy Series News 30, Varieties 19:15 *News in Hebrew*, News in Arabic 20:00 *Detectors* 21:00 *Local Programmes* 21:30 *A Kind of Magic* 22:00 *News in English* 22:20 Feature Film: "Double Vision"

PRAYER TIMES

04:01 *Fajr* (Sunrise) 05:34 *Dhuhr* 12:41 *Asr* 16:22 *Maghreb* 21:21 *Isha*

7H10L1RM9JW9CHURCHES.

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellie, Tel. 63740. Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 63785. St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590. Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.

14-year-old boy missing

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

JORDAN — The case of another missing child has been reported; this time of a 14-year-old Zarga boy who was last seen Friday in the company of two strange men. Family members and police are looking for Samer Mohammad Musa, the eldest son of Mohammad Musa, a locksmith in Zarga, who disappeared when on an errand in the main Zarga market, said Mamoun Tumati, a cousin.

Samer, the eldest of six siblings, was getting an empty carton for his father, who runs a key-cutting shop in Zarga, Mr. Tumati told the Jordan Times.

The boy was last seen "in the company of two strange young men, walking away from the direction of his father's shop," he said.

The family informed police when the boy failed to return home and put advertisement in local papers along with his photo. No one had responded to the advertisements until press time Monday.

"At first everyone thought the boy had gone wandering and

would come back by evening although it was not in his nature to do so," said Mr. Tumati, adding that as far as the family knew, the boy had one dinar on him when he went missing.

The family also searched the Wihdat camp outside Amman after a divinator consulted by the family said the boy could be found there.

"We spent the entire day in the camp after the sheikh said Samer could be found in Wihdat restaurant," Mr. Tumati said.

Zarga police sources said they had registered the case of a missing boy and had adopted "the usual procedures in such cases" — meaning an all-points bulletin and description of the boy distributed to all patrol vehicles.

Mr. Tumati and a female member of the family reached by the phone said the missing boy did not have any family problems that could have prompted him to leave home and stay away.

"As far as we know, the boy was very obedient and did not quarrel with anyone in the family," said Mr. Tumati.

Following the release of the advertisement in Monday's paper,

ers, giving two Zarga phone numbers for anyone who had any knowledge of the whereabouts of the boy, the family received several mysterious calls, Mr. Tumati said.

"The caller would not identify himself but would ask 'has Samer been found?'" said Mr. Tumati. "The caller hung up immediately after we said 'no'."

"We don't know whether these were prank calls or someone who was anxious to know whether we had found the boy," he added.

The case of Samer was the third reported disappearance of children in the last three months.

A nine-year-old boy went missing in late July and was found murdered in a cemetery a few days later. A 20-year-old cousin who was hostile to the boy's father was arrested and later reported to have confessed to sodomy and killing the boy.

The second case was reported in Aqaba, where an eight-year-old girl was raped and killed. The body was found in a box in an abandoned house. A suspect was arrested in the case and was reported to have confessed to the crime.

Majali urges reduced bureaucracy

JORDAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdal Salam Al Majali Monday urged employees of the Ministry of Social Development to "deal with the public in a spirit of cooperation and to be rational" in handling public issues.

"Successful performance depends on the principle of sharing and dialogue and dealing with substance rather than form," said the prime minister during a visit to the ministry.

He called on the civil servants to cut down on routine work and urged weekly meetings between the heads of departments and their subordinates, especially those in direct contact with the public.

"Civil servants ought to help avoid bureaucracy as much as possible, and promote a spirit of understanding and mutual respect among themselves so that they can form a united team, working for the higher national interest," Dr. Majali said.

Parliamentary delegation returns home after talks with Sudanese officials

JORDAN (Petra) — A Jordanian Parliamentary delegation led by Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat returned to Amman Monday following a several-day visit to Sudan during which it held talks with Sudanese parliamentarians.

Dr. Arabiyat said upon arrival in Amman that the talks with Sudanese parliamentarians covered Jordanian-Sudanese cooperation in Education, higher education, agriculture and other fields.

The two sides issued a joint statement following the talks, giving details of the topics reviewed during the Jordanian Parliamentary delegation's visit, noting that the delegation had a meeting with Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir whom they conveyed greetings from His Majesty King Hussein and the Jordanian people.

The Jordanian deputies also met with Sudanese ministers of Higher Education, Agriculture, Finance and National Economy in separate sessions.

The Jordanian deputies toured a number of economic projects and military training camps Kharroum and Um Durman.

According to Dr. Arabiyat, the joint statement highlighted Jordanian-Sudanese cooperation in higher education, urging the governments of the two countries to grant scholarships for students from both countries to pursue higher studies. The statement urged the universities of the two countries to conduct joint efforts in Arabinus publications on science for the benefit of Arab students.

In the agriculture and economic fields, the statement called for cooperation between Jordan and Sudan in exploiting natural resources and livestock wealth.

The Jordanian side, according to the statement, voiced appreciation for Sudan's efforts to promote agricultural development. It also called for joint efforts to further promote Sudan's endeavours to increase cereal and meat production.

The Sudanese side expressed

desire to benefit from advanced methods and techniques used in agriculture in Jordan, like drip irrigation systems.

In the political field, the Jordanian side voiced support for Sudan's "pan-Arab and pan-Islamic orientation". The statement said that the two sides called on Arab and Muslim countries to end their disputes "through peaceful means and direct their potentials and efforts towards fighting the Zionist enemy."

The statement reaffirmed the need for Jordanian and Sudanese parliamentarians to exchange visits and bolster ties between their countries.

The latest U.S. missile attack on Iraq was condemned by the joint statement, which also deplored continued sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people. It called on the Arab Nation's parliamentarians to step up efforts to confront "the conspiracies being hatched against the Arab Nation." The statement also called on the Arab and Islamic government



Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyat

ments to set up an Islamic parliamentary union to deal "with conspiracies facing the Islamic Nation and urged Arab and Islamic governments to work towards repatriating the Palestinian refugees stranded in southern Lebanon.

Meeting assesses agricultural output

JORDAN (J.T.) — A group of 50 Jordanian researchers Monday opened a three-day meeting to discuss progress in the "Mashreq Project" which aims at increasing the productivity of barley, forage and sheep in Syria, Jordan and Iraq.

The output of this agricultural season and plans and programmes for the coming season will be on the top of the agenda of the meeting, according to a Ministry of Agriculture announcement.

The meeting, being held at the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer, is an annual gathering organised by the Ministry for Jordanian specialists to assess the agricultural production in the country on a regular basis, said the

announcement.

Addressing the opening session was Mahmoud Dweiri, the centre's director, underlined the importance of the project and called for conveying its results to local farmers. He said that farmers ought to be acquainted with modern technology used to develop agricultural production.

The Mashreq Project, initiated in 1989 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Studies (AFESS) aims at increasing the production of cereals, animal feed and sheep in three neighbouring Arab countries.

The International Centre for Agricultural Research in the dry Areas (ICARDA) is providing

technical support for the project.

The five-year project focuses on transferring technology, available in the national programmes, to farmers and sheep owners by conveying to them the benefits that they can achieve by applying recommended technology, said Dr. Dweiri.

The project also focuses on training national teams and enhancing interactions between researchers and extension specialists in the three countries.

According to ICARDA office here, the project applies a farm system approach with animal plant integration.

The activities are undertaken by multi-disciplinary national teams where researchers work side by side with the farmers.

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"Conspiracies against Iraq were planned before its occupation of Kuwait" in August 1990, he said.

Mr. Zabri, who has just returned from Iraq where a cultural cooperation agreement was signed between his party and Iraq's ruling Ba'ath Party, emphasised that the new regional order maintains Israel's military and technological supremacy was unavoidable.

Mr. Murad added that the U.S. used the U.N. as an umbrella to implement its "politics against Arabs."

Mr. Zabri remarked that the U.S. used many pretexts to attack

"In this new order, Arabs have nothing but to yield to American conditions," Mr. Zabri said.

Activists say Iraq victim of U.S. 'conspiracy'

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

"AMMAN — Three political activities have asserted that "the continuous American aggression against Iraq" is aimed at weakening the Arab World in order to impose a new U.S.-dominated regional order."

Mansour Murad, a member of the Lower House of Parliament and president of Jordan National Youth Association, Tayseer Al Zabri, general secretary of the Jordan People's Party, and Jalal Abbasi, assistant general-secretary of the Arab Lawyers Association, agreed at a seminar on "American continuous aggression on Iraq" Saturday that Arab

Iraq and curb its technological development.

"Conspiracies against Iraq were planned before its occupation of Kuwait" in August 1990, he said.

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Opinion & Analysis

JORDAN TIMES, TUESDAY, JULY 13, 1993

Jordan Times

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Lower interest rates

LATEST STATISTICS reveal that inflation in the country has jumped to six per cent during the first half of this year. Economic planners had anticipated only four per cent. Translated into real economic terms, the national economy in several sectors appears to be heading beyond envisaged figures. The higher-than-expected inflation is linked to the higher-than-usual bank deposits in Jordanian banks and in turn to surplus liquidity. Latest figures put these Jordanian deposits in the first quarter of the year at nearly JD 7 million — something that was bound to heat up the economy in certain areas and in turn cause higher-than-usual increases in prices, especially in housing, clothing and food staples. It is common knowledge that money supply is directly related to inflation and the more money is available the higher the prices of goods and commodities would be. These economic indications may not pose serious hardships to well-to-do Jordanians, but they certainly will cause considerable economic hardships to the majority of Jordanians. It is also common knowledge that economy pressures have political and social implications, especially in an election year where hopes are being pinned on moderates achieving greater presence in the next Parliament. At the rate things are going, extremists will surely capitalise on the sufferings of the poor in the country and translate that into political power. But it is not only elections that should bother the government. Social and economic justice should always preoccupy the government because any tampering with them would cause instability in the Kingdom. The need to achieve economic and social justice is an objective worthy of attaining on its own merits. Political considerations, be they related to parliamentary elections in the future or to the peace process, are not all that counts in combating high inflationary tendencies in the country.

Jordan prides itself as a country of moderation and as a place where there is equal opportunity for economic and social progress across the board. We certainly do not wish for ourselves a nation of haves and have-nots on a scale that would interfere or prejudice the overall well-being of the country.

The safest and surest way to scale down the inflation is for banks to reduce interest rates on deposits and savings to even lower levels, whereby the public would be forced to seek higher return on their money by investing their savings in various projects rather than be satisfied with interest from banks.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAI Arabic daily commented Monday on the meetings starting in Amman to discuss various topics related to the special relationship between Jordan and Palestine. Despite Israeli attempts to prevent the Arabs in general and the Jordanians and the Palestinians in particular from forging unity, the Jordanians and the Palestinians living on the two sides of the River Jordan are determined to attain unity by all means, said the daily. The meetings, starting at the Foreign Ministry Monday, are the fruit of successful talks started here last week by His Majesty King Hussein and President Yasser Arafat, aimed at maintaining consultations and coordination between the two sides on all issues of mutual concern and with regard to the peace process, the paper pointed out. It said that the continued consultations between the two leaderships are bound to provide the climate opportunity for them to draw up joint policies and adopt joint stands with regard to the ongoing peace process and the future developments. The paper said that despite the developments that shook the Middle East over the past decades nothing has shaken the unity of the two peoples on both sides of the river and the meetings starting in Amman Monday are one more manifestation of this fact. The Jordanians and the Palestinians, added the paper, have the same aspirations and share a common destiny and have no alternative but to unite their efforts for the future.

AL DUSTOUR commented on the U.S. envoy Dennis Ross's current tour of the region trying to stimulate the peace process. The paper said that there are signs that Mr. Ross's endeavours are heading towards total failure. This is simply because the U.S. envoy has failed to end Israel's intransigent position and to make the Israeli government accept an amended version of the U.S. document a copy of which was presented to the Palestinians, said the paper. This failure is bound to bring about a complete deadlock in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations and threatens the whole process, added the paper. As Jordan receives Mr. Ross Monday, the Kingdom can only express concern and dissatisfaction over the outcome of his tour to date, said the paper. But it said Jordan still hopes that the Clinton administration would exercise pressure on the Israeli government to make it comply with the international legitimacy and accept U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning the Palestine question. What Jordan hopes to see, it said, is a more serious attitude on the part of the U.S. administration in its dealings with the peace process and in applying the rules of international legitimacy.

The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

An Arab/Islamic marketplace of ideas

It is often suggested, but not yet conclusively proven, that many quarters in the West wish to promote a combination of Islam and Arabism as the new international menace that threatens the western way of life and values. Suddenly, in the wake of fall of communism, the West has awakened to Islam as an uneasy neighbour, a historical enigma, and an increasingly frequent source of terror. The West, with a few exceptions, rarely makes the effort to understand the full depth and texture of Islamic societies.

The predominant intellectual contention of this confrontational school of thought is that, from the perspective of the West — from within the air-conditioned comforts of the artificial world of the suburban shopping mall — Islam is alien, mysterious, historically contentious and therefore it should be presumed dangerous. This is largely based on a combination of ignorance, fear, lack of human contact, narrowness of vision and a strong dose of dramatised commercialism that makes money for western corporate interests, but leaves behind a trail of human misconception and misunderstanding that can be deadly in the long run ("The Sheikh," starring Rudolph Valentino, was a captivating American film in the early decades of this century that burned a romantic, fantasy image of Arabs deep into the American psyche; it is no surprise, therefore, to see that "the sheikh," starring Omar Abdul Rahman, is a captivating, live, real-life television thriller in the closing decade of this century).

More sinister perhaps than these depictions of Arabism/Islam is the latest twist to the unfortunate confrontation between two impressive civilisations: the increasing frequent assertion by westerners, especially Americans, that Islam and democracy are incompatible. Note the subtle but important distinction here: we do not hear many contentions that Arabs cannot be democratic. The operative proposition is that Islam is inherently undemocratic; this viewpoint is manifested in the general American and western tendency to do nothing, or nothing more serious than uttering nice phrases, about democratisation in Arab/Islamic lands. Therefore, the American-led West vigorously uses diplomatic pressure and sanctions to assure democratisation in places such as Haiti, Peru, Nigeria, South Africa, the ex-Soviet Baltic and Central Asian republics, Mali, China, Cambodia and other lands, but no parallel effort is made to promote or restore democracy in Arab/Islamic lands.

The process at work here is deeply sinister and unfortunate, and will only lead to further misunderstanding, confrontation and bloodshed. We see this in the use of terror tactics in the United States itself, apparently by Arabs/Muslims driven by powerful rage at American policies and double standards in the Middle East. The Commercial mall of American materialistic civilisation is itself threatened today by the extremism of ordinary Arabs/Muslims whose sustained suffering and mass national humiliation has driven them to fanaticism. This is simply one more good reason for Americans and Arabs — or more generally, the predominantly Christian Occident and the predominantly Islamic Orient in general — to work hard to break the cycle of misunderstanding, stereotyping and fear that they are both caught up in.

In this respect, events in Jordan may be able to play a useful role in providing a bridge across which Arabs and Americans may try to reach out to one another and to connect on the basis of something more substantive and more lasting than a movie, a fast food franchise or mutually psychedelic visions of romanticised fantasies. Specifically, Jordan offers an opportunity for interested parties in the West to see a process of democratic pluralism slowly unfolding on a day-to-day and week-to-week basis. We are far from being an established, effective democracy, but our society is manifesting deep-rooted pluralistic impulses that should ring familiar with the advocates of liberal democracy. The important thing for foreign observers is to recognise that our brand of democratic pluralism will be different from their brands; for though we aspire to the same ultimate goals of human dignity, social justice, national stability and international peace, our social traditions and value systems are configured differently because of our very different environmental conditions, historical experiences and religious precepts.

The dynamic pace of domestic political activity in Jordan in the run-up to the parliamentary elections later this year is a positive sign of the steady trend towards pluralistic democracy that has characterised the country since mid-1989. It is precisely because this has taken place without fanfare, regressions or violence that the developments in Jordan should be appreciated as a possible harbinger of things to come in other Arab/Islamic societies. In many ways, Jordan may be the only Arab/Islamic society whose people and leadership have the opportunity today to express themselves and articulate their aspirations in a climate free from severe economic distortions, political pressures, ideological tensions, military threats and transcontinental economic and security dependencies that have seen once proud Arab cultures assume the status of international wards. I would suggest that if the Arab people were free to determine their future and their political systems, they would probably undergo a process very similar to that which we are experiencing in Jordan today.

Therefore, the number and nature of our political parties are important signs of our emerging political culture. The specific ideological configurations that define the political scene are interesting in themselves because of the breadth of views represented in parties, non-governmental organisations, student and women's groups and other organised groupings. More important, though, is the nature of the process underway — the

formulation by the people of Jordan of a new political culture that responds to their own identity, traditions, rights and aspirations, while also incorporating principles of liberal and representative democracy as practised in other parts of the world.

The ultimate form and content of Jordanian democratic pluralism will require many years and decades to become clear and to evolve into a stable system with a relatively fixed number of players. Many of our existing parties are little more than historical footnotes — mini-patriarchies in which tribal leaders seek to foist history itself by disguising their tribalism under the cloak of superficial political pluralism. Other parties are impressive testaments to our people's quest to build on our rich history and to honour its lessons in decent communal organisation and along-term national durability. The fact that our 18 existing parties are deeply engaged in a process of political horse-trading, mergers, splits and coalitions is a sign of their individual weaknesses, but also of their serious intent to play a meaningful role in the development of the society and the country.

It is probably fair to say that the variety of Jordanian parties and the richness of their ideological perspectives are as impressive as anything we see in any established democracy in the industrialised world. I am very impressed by the wide range of ideological views on offer in the country, which reflect the people's latent desire to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and their future. The lack of political violence or gridlock that often characterise other transforming societies (Algeria, Nigeria, Cambodia, South Africa) is also heartening.

"From the perspective of the West Islam is alien, mysterious, historically contentious and therefore it should be presumed dangerous. This is largely based on a combination of ignorance, fear, lack of human contact, narrowness of vision and a strong dose of dramatised commercialism that makes money for Western corporate interests but leaves behind a trail of human misconception and misunderstanding that can be deadly in the long run."

The reason for this — and the link with the West's frequently anti-Islamic attitude — is that democratic political pluralism is not so new or alien to our society; it is only a more formal, organised and politicised expression of a legacy of ethnic, religious and cultural pluralism that has defined the Middle East and its Arab/Islamic/ethnic identity for thousands of years. The historical fact of this region is that for some ten thousand years — ever since the emergence of settled village life — it has always been characterised by multi-ethnic, multi-religious societies. Pluralism, therefore, is not a new goal that we pluck from the western shopping mall; it is a deeply engrained component of our national character — a powerful determinant of our own historical bazaar of peoples, ideas, religious and cultures that have defined us and helped us to survive for so long.

The truly novel development today is the transformation of our ethnic/religious/cultural brand of pluralism into a more systematic political pluralism that will see political parties, the press, intellectual centres and special interest groups assuming roles that were formerly played by tribal patriarchs. Our political parties, therefore, should be seen as vehicles for the vital transition from a pluralism of top-heavy, patriarchal ethnicity to a pluralism of grassroots, political ideology and accountability. Don't be in a hurry, though. This process took about 1,500 years to mature and stabilise in western Europe — from the Roman Empire to the French Revolution — and we should not be expected to complete it in a few years.

The important thing is for the process to continue; despite occasional lapses and diversions, it will allow the people of this region to express their views and to organise themselves politically and nationally in a context of freedom that they have not enjoyed for many centuries, if not millennia. It will also allow Arabs/Muslims to modernise their brand of pluralism, thereby providing a logical link between our ancient bazaars and the West's modern malls — a link that does not honour commercial materialism as much as it values humane concepts of pluralism and tolerance that are inherent in the notion of a marketplace of ideas. Those around the world, particularly in the West, who question the compatibility of Arab/Islamic society with democratic pluralism would do well to study Arab/Islamic history and the contemporary Jordanian experience. They would reveal a tale of human drama and dynamism as exciting as any film — and far more accurate and honest.

By Wole Soyinka

WHEN the National Electoral Commission of Nigeria decided, a few weeks ago, not to announce the verdict of the nation on the next civilian president, it did, in effect, pronounce a verdict on the Nigerian nation: a piecemeal death. The Chief Undertaker is General Ibrahim Babangida. The pall-bearers are the ethnic manipulators and arms dealers, self-styled latter-day patriots. They are led by a sinister character known as Chief Arthur Nzeribe, leader of a vague, unregistered body called the Association for Better Nigeria. The Chief Mourner is, of course, Professor Henry Nwosu, chairman of the National Electoral Commission (present whereabouts unknown). The scavengers of history are hovering around the nation's borders. Their role will outlast the demise of a once-resilient, vibrant entity known as Nigeria. Future generations may recall this entity as having been once a source of envy, a reservoir of hope for a benighted continent, now mangled beyond salvage.

A nation of some 90 million people is being wound round the finger of a Master Player whose individual state is seriously in ques-

tion. His cohorts insist that the nation is on the path to democracy, but surely the signpost reads to all but the purblind: Transition to Hell. Purgatory is our present interminable manoeuvring between the U-Turns, Diversions and Cul-de-sacs in a lunatic maze subjected to the daily improvisations of a — surely by now — recognisably irrational designer who is firmly locked onto a monomaniac goal: survival in power.

He is surrounded by an unblinking guard of sycophants who open up to him only tiny apertures of reality that conform to the needs of his solipsistic existence. But it would be wrong to say they are all sycophants. Quite a handful are military and civilian opportunists with or without a guilty past. Uniformly they are all in dire dread of the future. The captive thinks that he is the manipulator but, in truth, in many lethal aspects, he is the plant object of their wiles.

Principal of these forces is the virtual power behind Nigeria's security services. There will be time enough to name him directly, but that time is not yet. Let us simply identify him as the Mephistopheles to Babangida's far more inept Faust. This individual is pampered and puppet-

Harvard recommendations — a recipe to economic suicide

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

had embarked on a two-year research project on "Economic transition for securing peace in the Middle East," in which Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian economists participated.

The project, which was undertaken by a Harvard centre called "The Institute for Social and Economic Policy in the Middle East," operates as a think-tank which, I think, serves Israel's interest in a very intelligent manner.

The project, in which participating economists were expected to generate ideas, options and recommendations to formulate and shape the transitional period, produced a report, the executive summary of which was issued during the last week of June 1993.

Although participating Jordanian economists have clearly stated that the recommendations of the project were "written up by the university and not by the participant economists," it does not preclude the fact that statements made by the overseers of the project sought to involve Jordan in a premature normalisation of relations with Israel.

It seems that the objectives of the project were to promote economic normalisation before signing a peace treaty and to initiate an Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian dialogue parallel to the official peace negotiations of the Madrid conference. The director of the Harvard Institute involved in this project, Leonard J. Hausman, recently, made it clear that "agreements" were "written up by the university and not by the participant economists." It does not preclude the fact that statements made by the overseers of the project sought to involve Jordan in a premature normalisation of relations with Israel.

The report asserts that "peace in the Middle East will be secured only when it takes root in the everyday lives of people in the region." This may be true, but what about the occupied lands and the continued denial of human rights of the Palestinians?

The report talks about "granting Palestinians economic sovereignty" but not about recognising Palestinian national rights and sovereignty. It calls for "the three economies to move towards free trade." Egypt should also be included in free trade arrangements, which means that the normalisation of Camp David is not sufficient, and Jordan should contribute more to develop an "all-embracing Middle East economic community," but without any compensation for the Jordanian losses.

The report wants no customs posts at the Jordanian borders with Israel and the occupied territories and the continued employment of at least 100,000 Palestinians in Israel. It says that Palestinians pay only 18 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), which is below average at this level of development. The public expenditure on infrastructure in the occupied territories, almost non-existent, was described as below the normal levels.

In summary, the report sees things with Israeli eyes. It tries to give Israel economically more than it was asking for. Plainly said, it wants Jordan to commit suicide.

The Harvard University and its Institute for Social and Economic Policy have the right to serve Israel in any manner they see fit, but it has no right to use Jordanian fronts to sell this service.

Due to technical reasons, the Jordan Times was unable to publish Dr. Fanek's weekly article last Sunday. We apologise for the delay.

one more kobo of Nigerian funds be spent on the interminable soap-opera being so haphazardly scripted by our putative Faust and his Mephistopheles, who still imagines that he enjoys the security of a mask. But all that is in the very immediate future. From Lagos to Kano, from Cross River to Kwara, the people have expressed their unambiguous choice. Relocating the goalposts after the goal has been netted is such a blatant act of dishonesty, dishonour and lack of integrity that only the desperate or the sick in mind can conceive of it, much less expect that either the players or spectators will applaud it.

Nigeria deserves peace, if only for its economic recovery. But Nigerians are a proud people, very jealous of their human dignity. Any individual or class within Nigeria that fails to respect this simply dooms itself, however long it takes, and whatever sacrifice is yet again extracted from the populace in the process.

The piecemeal death of Nigeria has been prescribed by the actions of General Babangida and his tiny cabal, but we know that we have been there before. Reprieve is not beyond the enterprising strength of Nigerians.

The Independent.

Features



Members of the so-called hit team. They did not know where Mr. Bush was. One had a bomb, but threw it away. But they did smuggle whisky

A ready-made verdict

Trial in Kuwait — violation of defendants' rights

By Shyam Bhattacharya

KUWAIT CITY — The kindest epithet about the whisky smugglers accused of plotting George Bush's death is that they took their script from non-stop viewings of *Abbott and Costello*.

The trial prompted President Clinton to launch 23 Tomahawk missiles on Baghdad, but evidence before the court shows the accused to be anything but professional agents.

Two key members of the gang claim that they did not know how to reach Kuwait University, where Mr. Bush was due to receive an honorary degree, that their stolen cars ran out of petrol; and that the payment promised by the Iraqis amounted to the equivalent of £870 to be shared between them. They were supposed to recoup the rest of their expenses by selling 13 cases of Scotch and six kilos of adulterated hashish.

"You smell something fishy about this," says Najib Al Wakayan, one of the seven defending lawyers. "Our police agree that the Iraqis have a very good intelligence system and yet the members of the so-called hit team did not even know where they could find shelter in Kuwait. It's as if they had been set up. In my opinion this whole plot was the responsibility of someone at a very low level, not Saddam or the head of the intelligence; this has not been planned at a high level."

Some U.S. officials believe the plot was hatched by intelligence masterminds in Baghdad and stretches all the way back to Saddam Hussein. Yet the half-hearted backing given to the self-confessed whisky smugglers does not bear the traces of a well-constructed plan.

There is evidence as well that the U.S. administration was not wholly convinced either. On the day of the attack a U.S. diplomat in Kuwait approached defence lawyers and asked if they could help in prolonging the trial until September. "If the judge reaches a quick decision our president

will be forced to react," the diplomat said.

The alleged ringleader of the plot, Raad Al Assadi, says Iraqi intelligence offered him a car that was so substandard that he volunteered to use his own hardtop jeep stolen two years earlier from Kuwait. It did not occur to him that his Iraqi controllers were duty bound to offer him the best equipment available for his suspected mission. Mr. Assadi thought his job was to blow up a car showroom, and the central market in Kuwait City.

"I did not know about the mission to assassinate George Bush," he declared on the first day of his trial. Mr. Assadi knows he faces the death sentence if convicted, but he looks and remains confident behind the steel cage where he sits along with the 13 other defendants. He is prone to theatrical outbursts that include repeated interruption of the judge.

His self-effacing partner, Wali Al Ghazali, is a male nurse from the Iraqi holy city of Al Najaf. His job was to detonate the bomb in another car, a Toyota Landcruiser, packed with enough explosive to kill everything within 400 yards.

If that failed, he was supposed to strap on a suicide belt also packed with explosives and blow himself up alongside Mr. Bush.

Mr. Ghazali later changed his mind and threw the belt into the desert. It is a crucial piece of evidence but, despite the combined efforts of the Kuwaitis, the FBI and the CIA, it has not been found.

The two men could not be more mismatched. Mr. Assadi has supposedly admitted his guilt, only to contradict his own statement, in open court, whereas Mr. Ghazali has been singing like a bird, admitting all the charges including his connections with Iraqi intelligence.

"They are supposed to be partners in crime," says one of the defending lawyers. "But now

they sit at opposite ends of the cage barely acknowledging each other's existence."

"I have been pushed by people who had no mercy, now I'm asking for your mercy and the mercy of the Kuwaiti people," Mr. Ghazali told the judge. "You know I fear the Iraqi regime, the Iraqi regime pushed me."

It is the kind of pleading that inspires sympathy from the public gallery. Many see him as an unwilling victim of the brutal regime that has a history of promoting terror. "He is so anxious to please, he'll end up admitting to the murder of Abraham Lincoln or anyone else for that matter," was the cynical comment of one lawyer who watched his performance last month.

The gang's oldest member has said that he had been a victim of brutality at the hands of Kuwaiti security forces. Ali Khudhair Baddai Abid, 73, a labourer who denies he is part of the conspiracy, limped to the witness stand and told the court how he was hit in the ribs shortly after he was arrested.

Defence lawyers say all 14 men were soundly thrashed. "Understand things were thrown at them when they were being questioned," says one lawyer. "It was anything that came to hand, even boxes of tissues."

But Mr. Abid is the only one prepared to level his accusations in open court.

Mr. Abid admits seeing crates of alcohol and a machine gun in the car that brought him into Kuwait, but claims he did not know to whom they belonged.

By attacking Iraqi intelligence headquarters in Baghdad in retaliation for the conspiracy, Bill Clinton has elevated this tragic comedy to the status of another international crisis that undermines Middle East stability.

Like Kuwait's public prosecutor, he has pre-empted the judgment of the court and reduced the men's chances of a fair trial.

Three weeks before the trial started, the prosecutor characterised the defendants as "criminals who allied with the devil and conspired with him to assault Kuwait's honoured guest... investigations proved beyond doubt that it was the Iraqi intelligence service which moved this rotten group of accused persons to execute the plan of the devil."

Amnesty International is concerned that 12 of the men may be convicted and executed following unfair trials. It has called on the Kuwaiti authorities to intervene by ordering a fresh trial in which the rights of the accused are fully protected.

"In addition to its concerns about the violation of the defendants' rights during pre-trial detention... and the failure of proceedings before the state security court to conform to international standards for fair trials we believe the defendants' rights to a fair trial may have been jeopardised by other factors," Amnesty said.

"This case has been treated politically rather than legally," says another lawyer. "But now I am trying to get the court to treat it legally. I hate this case because it puts our judges in a corner. Either they find the defendants guilty, or they find the whole world, including America, guilty. Our judges are being pushed to be very severe."

Defence lawyers — all but one appointed by the state — had no access to their clients until the day the trial started. They reject the prosecutors' claim that they were fixed 10 days in advance and chose to ignore their responsibilities.

This glaring denial of basic rights meant each of the 14 suspects was questioned again and again without access to legal advice. Their interrogations were carried out by Kuwaitis as well as by CIA and FBI agents.

The FBI report remains under wraps, although a State Department source subsequently told a U.S. news network that the confessions were useless in view of the methods used by the Kuwaitis to obtain them. Yet it is these same confessions and the forensic evidence gathered from the explosive that was used to justify the cruise missile attack on Baghdad.

"Why did the FBI and CIA have access to the men before

Kuwaiti authorities claim had escaped. The defence believe he is a secret witness protected by the prosecution.

Police Colonel Abdul Samad Al Shanti, who appeared for the prosecution, also claimed to have a secret source who tipped him off six weeks before the Bush visit about an Iraqi terrorist plot to attack "places and VIPs" in Kuwait. Mr. Bush was never mentioned. Asked why he did not immediately place his suspects under surveillance, the colonel told the court: "I did not have time."

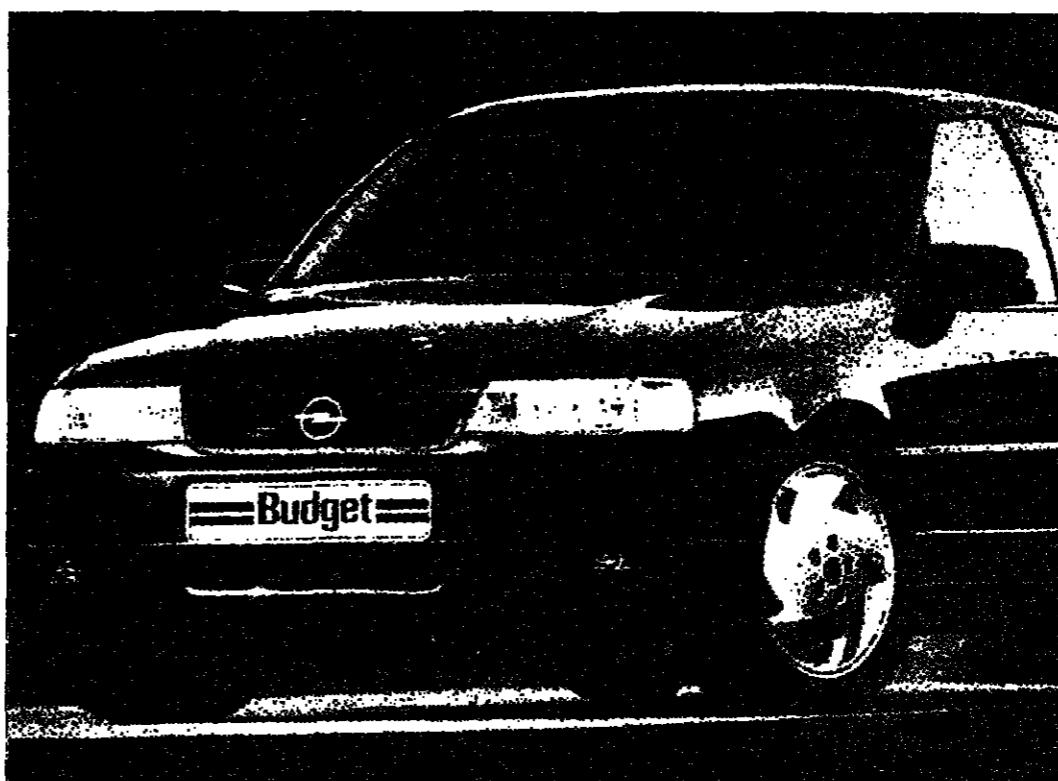
Kuwaitis are also divided. From the start we were not terribly happy about the issue," says Ghazim Al Najjar, a Kuwaiti human rights activist and head of an association to defend war victims.

"Things are happening in a political context and I don't feel easy about them. The worst thing about these political cases is the impact on the U.S. Kuwaitis could always say there is a need for a retrial and maybe they would be acquitted. But it would be difficult for the Americans."

— The Observer.

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Clinton's verdict: Iraqis clear up after the raid

Donkeys make a comeback in Gaza

By Sammy Ketz
Agence France Presse

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip — There's only one way to travel in the Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip today for most people there: by donkey.

Since the army isolated the occupied territory at the end of March after a wave of killings of Israelis, forcing thousands out of work, the automobile has simply become too expensive.

The weekly beast market in Gaza City puzzles with bidders for the domestic ass and prices have more than doubled.

"I have not earned anything since the closure," said Atef, a 25-year-old refugee from Shatti Camp.

"I had to sell off my truck for spares. I could no longer afford the insurance, the tax and the petrol."

Atef, who used to work as a farm hand in Israel, has his eyes on a solid brown beast and joins

the crush to check its condition. The animal's ears and legs must be straight, teeth solid and it must not jump when its testicles are squeezed.

The bidding mounts quickly but Atef sees off all comers with a \$200 offer, even if he thinks it is far too much.

"With a donkey and cart I will at least be able to deliver farm produce to the market and earn about \$11 a day to feed my family," said the father of two children.

At the same time, car prices have slumped and petrol sales fallen.

"I used to sell 6,000 litres a day," said Mohammad Abu Issam, who owns a petrol station at Shatti. "Now I'm lucky to sell 3,000 litres."

Nabil Abu Abed, who runs a garage, has run out of customers. "Each week about 400 cars are up for sale in the Gaza Strip but no one is buying," he moaned.

"People everywhere try to buy bigger cars as they get older, but in Gaza we are going back to the age of the donkey."

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COMPANY'S NAME	TRADES	PREV. OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK	16,100	192.025	191.500
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	23,421	5.350	5.320
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	346,799	5.250	5.350
THE HOUSING BANK	77,085	2.122	2.160
ARAB BANKS GROUP	104,559	6.530	6.580
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	195,926	3.450	3.626
JORDAN BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	26,128	5.160	5.160
BETIS BANK FOR INVESTMENT	96,922	5.350	5.186
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	5,948	5.400	5.120
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	594,364	2.692	2.170
JORDAN INSURANCE	256,148	4.950	4.850
ARABIAN SEAS INSURANCE	680	4.200	4.400
JERUSALEM INSURANCE	35,745	2.150	2.170
ASSOCIATED INSURANCE	415	4.950	4.210
VARIOUS INSURANCE & REINSURANCE	37,150	4.940	4.240
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	2,369	3.180	3.200
JORDAN LIFE INSURANCE	249,113	3.420	3.420
JORDAN CLOUD INSURANCE	2,975	4.900	3.900
THE NATIONAL AFRICA INSURANCE	16,174	2.740	2.750
TRIBID DISTRICT ELECTRICITY	2,955	2.000	2.000
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	7,295	5.700	5.660
JOHNSON SERVICE LIVES	20,000	2.200	2.200
JORDAN TOURIST & SPA COMPLEX	97,084	4.685	4.750
NATIONAL POLICE SECURITY	1,058	1.930	1.920
JORDAN GOLD REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	27,100	2.100	2.100
JORDAN INTERNATIONAL TRADING CENTER	8,233	2.010	2.050
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL	1,228	1.220	1.200
JORDAN PRESS & PUBLISHING AD-DUSTOUR	21,340	2.000	2.000
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTEL	135,674	2.005	2.450
ATTACHED CONCRETE MATERIAL MANUFACTURING	1,267,077	1.200	1.200
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	27,648	2.100	2.100
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINERY	1,032	1.300	1.300
HOODLES INDUSTRIES	48,968	3.200	3.200
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL & AGRICULTURAL	12,575	2.000	2.000
THE JORDAN WORKED HILLS	1,586,957	15.450	15.400
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	2,555	0.160	0.160
JORDAN PLASTIC INDUSTRIES	2,955	0.160	0.160
JORDAN PRINTING & PACKING	2,955	0.160	0.160
JORDAN PLASTIC & CHEMICALS	18,410	2.000	2.000
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	7,745	2.000	2.000
ARAB CHEMICAL DETERGENTS INDUSTRIES	62,121	21.200	21.200
PAFA INDUSTRIES	23,804	3.120	3.120
JORDAN GLASS INDUSTRIES	2,582	0.550	0.520
ARAB INVESTMENT & INTERNATIONAL TRADE	327,289	22.900	22.800
ARAB ALUMINUM INDUSTRY	3,206	11.250	11.170
ARAB PAPER CONSTRUCTION & TRADING	1,470	4.200	4.200
JORDAN MEDICAL CORPORATION	30,974	2.000	2.000
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	1,278	0.550	0.550
INTERMEDIATE PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	34,454	4.240	4.250
JORDAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	5,963	0.180	0.180
JOHNSON SERVICE LIVES	74,745	2.000	2.000
UNIVERSAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES	80,165	9.300	9.250
JORDAN PLASTIC & MATERIALS JORDAN	15,140	1.260	1.240
JORDAN PLASTIC & MATERIALS JORDAN	20,240	1.200	1.200
JORDAN WOOD INDUSTRIES / JMC	8,438	1.750	6,750
NATIONAL CABLE & WIRE MANUFACTURING	173,976	10.900	10.600
JOHNSON SERVICE LIVES	13,140	1.200	1.200
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	149,791	4.300	4.310
JORDAN FERTILIZER CO. FOR AGRI. & FOOD PROD.	38,200	5.930	5.920
JOHNSON SERVICE LIVES	12,700	2.100	2.100
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	677,678	6.070	6.100
GRAND TOTAL	10,584,675		
NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET	48792		
TRADED VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET	JD 69610		

Financial Jordan Times
Markets in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 9/7/93	Tokyo Close Date 12/7/93
Sterling Pound	1.4805	1.4823
Deutsche Mark	1.7225	1.7232
Swiss Franc	1.5315	1.5555
French Franc	5.8580	5.8905**
Japanese Yen	109.88	109.93
European Currency Unit	1.1340	1.1260**

USD Per STD European Opening in 800 a.m. GMT

Euromoney Interest Rates Date: 12/7/1993

Currency 1 MTH 3 MTHS 6 MTHS 12 MTHS

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.00	3.18	3.37	3.62
Sterling Pound	5.90	4.84	5.81	5.72
Deutsche Mark	7.31	7.18	7.00	6.43
Swiss Franc	4.50	4.50	4.45	4.37
French Franc	8.12	7.50	6.87	6.37
Japanese Yen	3.12	3.18	3.09	3.12
European Currency Unit	7.93	7.75	7.31	6.61

Interest rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 12/7/1993

Currency Bid Offer

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6980	0.7000
Sterling Pound	1.0340	1.0392
Deutsche Mark	0.4047	0.4067
Swiss Franc	0.4548	0.4571
French Franc	0.1190	0.1196
Japanese Yen	0.6353	0.6365
Dutch Guilder	0.3600	0.3618
Swedish Krona	0.0874	0.0878
Italian Lira	0.0440	0.0442
Belgian Franc	0.01965	0.01975

Per 100

Other Currencies Date: 12/7/1993

Currency Bid Offer

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8260	1.8550
Lebanese Lira	0.0367	0.0420
Saudi Riyal	0.1857	0.1866
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2200	2.2900
Qatari Riyal	0.1890	0.1932
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2380
Omani Riyal	1.7800	1.8250

For 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for trading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs

1.2770/80 Canadian dollar

1.7350/60 Deutchmarks

1.9505/15 Dutch guilders

1.2580/93 Swiss francs

35.7576 Belgian francs

5.9100/50 French francs

1597/1600 Italian lire

109.85/95 Japanese yen

8.0510/610 Swedish crowns

6.3825/925 Norwegian crowns

6.7380/480 Danish crowns

One sterling \$1.4760/70

One ounce of gold \$393.90/394.40

Gulf states aim for customs union in 1993 despite obstacles

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Gulf Arab states aim to unify their customs tariffs this year in a move toward a common market but economists warn that such an agreement could be fragile. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) finance ministers will meet in Riyadh in September to approve a single tariff of between eight and 10 per cent on foreign imports, the GCC assistant secretary general for economic affairs has said.

"The proposed tariff will then be presented to the GCC summit

later this year for endorsement," Abdullah Al Quwaiz told reporters.

But Sheikh Ouwaiz, a Saudi, did not rule out the reservations of some member states that have blocked implementation of a 1982 agreement to unify the widely varied tariffs in the region.

Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, which impose tariffs of up to 20 per cent, have objected to low tariffs on the grounds they would hit their earnings from customs

duty.

In the United Arab Emirates, where tariffs are as low as one to four per cent, officials argue a hike could harm the import and re-export trade, which has become the main component of the country's non-oil business.

The other two GCC members, Kuwait and Oman, have low tariffs in general but impose duties on some products to protect local industries.

To reach a compromise, Gulf officials have suggested compensation to members whose earnings from customs will be affected, while another proposal called for proportional distribution of the income from taxes.

"Saudi Arabia and Bahrain will suffer most from the lower tariff as earnings from such a tax constitute a major part of their non-oil income," said Yussef Khalifa, an economics professor at Emirate University.

Russian Assembly adopts draft constitution

MOSCOW (AFP) — A Constitutional Assembly Monday approved a draft constitution for post-Soviet Russia that President Boris Yeltsin said would guarantee the stability needed to continue economic reforms.

Delegates voted 433 to 62 to approve the text that will be presented to local parliaments for their opinions in the upcoming weeks and return to delegates in August to determine a procedure for its adoption.

"It is clear today that the continued pursuit of economic reform would be simply impossible without a thorough solution to our constitutional problems, impossible as a matter of principle," Mr. Yeltsin told delegates in a speech prior to the vote.

"No single country in the world is capable of making radical transformations in the economy without political stability," he added.

"I can assure you that this draft solution resolves these problems. It creates the necessary favourable preconditions for the successful implementation of economic reform," the Russian leader said.

Earlier, Mr. Yeltsin warned leaders of Russian regions against what he termed "the threat of republicanism", after at least three regions last week upgraded their status from that of region to republic in a bid to boost their autonomy from Moscow.

Russian republics make up the top tier of the new system of government proposed by Mr. Yeltsin in the draft constitution that would replace the Soviet-era fundamental law.

"Republics, territories and regions are equal in economic rights under the draft constitution," Mr. Yeltsin stated.

"We are all responsible for the territorial integrity of Russia and no one should attempt to endanger it," he added.

The Sverdlovsk region, Mr. Yeltsin's home territory, last week decided to raise its status to that of republic and proclaimed itself the "South Ural Republic".

Sverdlovsk's decision was followed by that of the Primorye territory, surrounding the Far Eastern port city of Vladivostok, which now aspires to become the "Maritime Republic", and by the region of Vologda, north of Moscow.

Regional leaders have argued that Mr. Yeltsin's proposed multi-tier administrative system for the new Russian Federation will give Russia's 21 republics greater autonomy from Moscow than the other "federation subjects", including 49 regions, 11 districts, two federal cities or five territories.

Regional authorities argue that they too should have the right to conclude bilateral treaties with Moscow and levy taxes directly, powers which fall under the jurisdiction of the republics, according to the draft basic law.

The Constitutional Assembly began work on the new draft law on June 5 in a bid to piece together a Fundamental Law that will replace the Brezhnev-era constitution, whose provisions did not allow for a clear division of powers between government and parliament.

Shevardnadze: Sukhumi will not fall

MOSCOW (AFP) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze returned from a ten-day stay in Sukhumi, the embattled capital of breakaway Abkhazia, Monday and vowed that the Black Sea city will not fall under rebel control. "I am certain of one thing: Sukhumi will not fall," Mr. Shevardnadze was quoted by Interfax as saying upon arriving at Tbilisi Airport early Monday.

The Georgian leader also stated that the 11-month war would soon end, adding that the situation in the western republic required a combination of military actions and peace negotiations.

Peace talks between Abkhazian and Georgian representatives, mediated by Russia, were to resume in Moscow later Monday, the Georgian embassy confirmed.

Mr. Shevardnadze travelled to the Black Sea city on July 2 as rebel forces launched an offensive on the southern region of Ochamchira, cutting off Sukhumi from the only other Georgian-held territory in Abkhazia.

Meanwhile, Georgian military headquarters in Sukhumi announced that they began lifting the blockade of Sukhumi in the Ochamchira region after having recaptured territory from the rebels last Friday. Interfax reported.

Bosnian Serbs retake strategic Muslim pocket

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Serbs were reported Monday to have recaptured a strategic Muslim pocket in southern Bosnia, cutting a link between the besieged town of Gorazde and the capital Sarajevo.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said Trnovo, some 30 kilometres south of Sarajevo, had been retaken by Serb forces the third time it had changed hands since the civil war began 15 months ago.

It quoted a Serb army statement as saying government troops had retreated in panic towards their main base on Mount Igman overlooking Sarajevo, leaving behind "scores of dead soldiers" and large quantities of weapons and ammunition.

"Their dream of forcibly connecting Sarajevo and Gorazde through Serb territories was shattered," it said.

The latest setback for the Muslim-led Bosnian army came a day after the government rejected a plan for a three-way partition of the country and insisted the former Yugoslav republic must be a single, federal state.

The decision appeared to dash hopes of an early resumption of

Geneva peace talks between warring Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the pocket in southern Bosnia, cutting a link between the besieged town of Gorazde and the capital Sarajevo.

Tanjug said the capture of Trnovo, which rebel Serbs opposed to Bosnian independence first seized in June 1992 but lost in August last year, was a major defeat for Muslim forces.

The agency said the recapture of Trnovo had also forged a direct link between the Serb-held Mount Igman and the Romanija Mountains northeast of Sarajevo with southeast Bosnia.

A spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in Sarajevo, Peter Kessler, said some 3,400 refugees from Trnovo were flocking towards the Mount Igman area, but he was unable to confirm the town had fallen.

On Sunday, Belgrade Radio reported Serb forces had captured the strategic Rogoj Pass south of Trnovo after a battle with government troops lasting several days.

On the political front, Bosnia's collective, multi-ethnic presiden-

cy was due to meet in Sarajevo Wednesday to set out their position for resumed talks in Geneva, although these appeared doubtful following their rejection of the only proposal on the table.

But there were signs of dissent among the seven presidency members who attended Sunday's meeting in Zagreb which threw out the Serb-Croat plan.

Croat member Milorad Akmadzic said the full presidency of nine members, including Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic, would go to Geneva for peace talks in a week to 10 days.

"All initiatives, this one and the Serb-Croat one will be discussed equally in Geneva," Mr. Akmadzic told reporters.

But minutes after he spoke

Muslim Vice President Ejup Ganic, who has condemned the Serb-Croat plan as tantamount to genocide, said there was no question of discussing ethnic partition.

He also suggested there were no plans to go to Geneva, but added: "If there is ceasefire and Sarajevo gets water and other enclaves get minimal conditions for survival we will go to negotiations."

The water situation in the capital became critical at the weekend when the main brewery



A Bosnian woman cries, leaning after hours of waiting with others at one of Sarajevo's pipelines (AP photo)

stopped pumping from an underground spring for lack of fuel.

UNHCR spokesman Kessler said the pump had provided drinking water for between 20,000 and 50,000 people a day. The only other available source now was a trickle from the Serb-held Jahorina Mountain providing only half a litre per person per day.

Mr. Kessler said many Sarajevans were drawing water from polluted city wells. Doctors were reporting 100 to 200 cases of dysentery a day, he added.

"A case of dysentery could be

critical when you need 12 to 14 hours a day just to find and collect water and food and firewood," Mr. Kessler said.

In a separate development, U.S. soldiers flew to Macedonia Monday to join U.N. peacekeeping forces patrolling the former Yugoslav republic's border with Serbia.

A total of 156 soldiers, wearing U.N. blue berets and carrying M-16 rifles, boarded two U.S. Air Force C-141 planes for the four-hour flight to Macedonia af-

ter an emotional farewell ceremony.

They will join the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR), beefing up a force of 700 Nordic U.N. peacekeepers already stationed along the border, prepared to block any threat of the war in former Yugoslavia spilling over into Macedonia.

Wearing green combat fatigues and carrying bulky backpacks, the soldiers marched two-by-two up the tail ramps onto the planes accompanied by music from a 20-piece brass band.

Scientists blast firm for sending dinosaur to Japan

PRICE, Utah (AFP) — U.S. scientists are blasting a Utah company for selling an entire dinosaur fossil to a museum in Japan. "It would be totally unthinkable for us to sell bones to Japan," said Don Burge of the College of Eastern Utah's Prehistoric Museum in Price, Utah. Mr. Burge added that museums stopped selling bones two decades ago. Western Paleo Lab of Provo, Utah, prepared and shipped the Stegosaurus skeleton for "a group of individuals," said company spokesman Jeff Parker. Mr. Parker said the group sold the bones to a Japanese company which bought for an unidentified museum. Despite criticism from Mr. Burge and other scientists, the lab has not been accused of breaking any laws since the sale of fossils removed from private lands is legal. The Stegosaurus, a large dinosaur with spikes on its backbone, was found in Wyoming. Mr. Parker said.

China to hold first dog show

PEKING (AFP) — China is to hold its first international dog show in October involving military, police and domestic breeds, a far cry from the days when the Communist Party banned keeping the pets in cities as a bourgeois habit. The Xinhua News Agency said the show would be held by the Ministries of Public Security, Health and Agriculture in conjunction with dog clubs in Hong Kong, Macau, the United States, Japan and Germany. More and more Chinese have started to keep dogs, which have become fashionable, although the trend has forced cities to regularly organize campaigns to kill dogs, blamed for noise and for carrying rabies. Last year the authorities in the eastern city of Shanghai launched a campaign to kill 10,000 dogs.

Manuscript called lost Shakespeare play

NEW YORK (R) — A New York expert said he found a manuscript of William Shakespeare's lost play, *Cardenio*, in the British Library. Newsweek reported. The magazine's July 19 edition said the play was never produced and presumed lost, was identified using handwriting analysis. Charles Hamilton compared the manuscript in Shakespeare's will with that of the untitled, unsigned 1612 play. The magazine said literary scholars have insisted that the drama is not up to Shakespeare's standards.

'Home alone' couple hand over children

CHICAGO (R) — A couple who drew international attention when they left their two daughters home alone during a Mexican vacation last December have surrendered the children for adoption, it was reported Sunday. A lawyer in the case confirmed that David and Sharon Schoo had voluntarily surrendered the girls at a court hearing last week, the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun-Times reported. The girls, Nicole, 10, and Diana, 5, were in an adoptive home where they will probably remain, the reports said. The Schoos pleaded guilty to child neglect and drug possession last April.

Traffic police brainstorm — a flashing helmet

LONDON (R) — A retired policeman has told how senior officers used him as a guinea pig more than 30 years ago to try out an experimental helmet with a flashing blue light on top to help direct traffic. Future generations of British police officers will be thankful the 1958 idea was a non-starter. Jim Sparks, now 72, recalled: "I felt a right Charlie. When the blue light started to flash I could have died. People drove past open-mouthed. I was never so embarrassed." The light proved too heavy and the helmet kept falling off so after 90 rush-hour minutes the concept was abandoned.

Will courts test bareheaded justice?

LONDON (R) — Some senior English judges are expected to doff their traditional horsehair wigs, which date back to the 18th century, and experiment with bareheaded justice, the Times newspaper reported Monday. Despite research within the legal profession that concluded wigs should stay, the Times said that for a short period in August judges in the Court of Appeal and the commercial courts are set to hear cases without their wigs. It says that in the vanguard for reform were lawyers in the commercial courts who often work on cases involving international clients unused to bewigged judges and lawyers.

Death toll from U.S. heatwave reach 48

NEW YORK (R) — A five-day heatwave still blanketing the east coast of the United States has killed 48 people, while in the midwest and parts of the south torrential rain and flooding has killed 17 and forced thousands to flee their homes.

All but one of the deaths reported in the heatwave sweeping the east from Florida to Maine were in and around Philadelphia.

At least 250,000 people were without fresh water Sunday in Des Moines, Iowa, after floods swamped water treatment plants. Residents were urged to buy bottled water or drain water heaters and toilet tanks for emergency supplies.

People were being rescued from rooftops as floodwaters spilled into thousands of acres of cropland in the Mississippi Valley and turned riverfront towns into seas of mud.

In St. Charles County, north of St. Louis, officials said people had piled furniture and belongings onto their roofs, where they hoped to ride the flood out. Because of the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, the area is considered most at risk.

Elbert Joe Friday, director of the National Weather Service, told a television news programme more rain was expected along the upper Mississippi in the next two days. The upper Mississippi and Missouri rivers are already at or near record highs at several points.

Vice-President Al Gore said Sunday the government, which has already issued disaster declaration covering much of the region, was ready to respond even if the expense added to the federal deficit.

Another recently formed conservation group, Shinsaito or the Renaissance Party, is even less likely to link up with the LDP, given that its leader and founder, former Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata, played a leading role in bringing the government down in a no-confidence vote on June 18.

But regardless of the announced intentions, a coalition with the ruling party cannot be

Coalition hopes recede for Japan ruling party facing poll defeat

TOKYO (AFP) — Almost certain to lose its majority in Sunday's general elections, Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) is also seeing its chances of continuing to govern in coalition slipping away.

Two small conservative parties, Sakigake, or Pioneer Party, formed last month, and the New Japan Party (NJP), formed 14 months ago, have announced their intention of merging into a block in parliament after the polls.

Masayoshi Takemura and Morihiko Hosokawa, the parties' respective leaders, both former ruling party members, have affirmed their groups would "remain for the time being outside any coalition government."

Another recently formed conservation group, Shinsaito or the Renaissance Party, is even less likely to link up with the LDP, given that its leader and founder, former Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata, played a leading role in bringing the government down in a no-confidence vote on June 18.

"Even if a coalition is out of the question, there could still be some form of cooperation or re-

siliently ruled out after the elections," a Western diplomat said.

Small parties are known to proclaim their independence from the two main political tendencies, the LDP and the Socialists, both unpopular at the moment, in the hope of widening their own support.

If the LDP loses the majority it has held for 38 years, no party could rule alone and the Sakigake and the NJP could find themselves holding the balance of power when talks on the formation of a new government begin.

Sadao Yamahara, president of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the Socialist major opposition group, said Monday the SDP could be in a position to strike a deal with the Sakigake and the NJP. The SDP, however, is itself tipped for a serious upset at the polls.

Mr. Miyazawa has not lost all hope of forming some kind of alliance which would allow him to continue ruling the country, and the SDP, the Sakigake and the NJP.

"Even if a coalition is out of the question, there could still be some form of cooperation or re-

siliently ruled out after the elections.

He did not want to be handed a poisoned chalice a second time, his popularity having been severely dented during his stint as prime minister during the last right-wing "co-habitation" with Socialist president Francois Mitterrand in 1986, two years before Mr. Mitterrand's mandate expired.

But Mr. Chirac faces a difficult period in the two year run-up to the elections. His success will depend on that of Mr. Balladur's government.

If the prime minister's popular-

ity rating remains as high as it is now, some believe that he could distance himself from Mr. Chirac and put himself up as the only credible right-wing presidential candidate, with the active support of the centre-right Union for French Democracy (UFD).

Mr. Chirac is confident that this will not be the case. For him, the crucial questions are whether Mr. Balladur wants to be president, and if so, whether he would get the backing of the RPR. To both questions, Mr. Chirac's answer is in the negative.

Three months after the right's victory at the polls, the mayor of Paris has resumed forays into the provinces "to find out what people are concerned about."

Mr. Chirac, whose neo-Gaullist Rally For The Republic (RPR) is the biggest party in parliament, was happy for Edouard Balladur to become prime minister after the March

keep the 36,000-strong U.S. garrison in South Korea for as long as Stalinist Pyongyang posed a nuclear threat in the region.

The West suspects North Korea of developing nuclear arms at two plants it refuses to open to international inspectors.

Washington and Pyongyang officials meet Wednesday in Geneva in a bid to resolve the nuclear impasse.

South Korean Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo said Monday the U.S. missile strike on Baghdad may serve as a warning to North Korea to alay quickly international fears it is developing nuclear weapons.

"Regardless of U.S. intentions, I think North Korea would have perceived a possible implication from the attack on Baghdad," Mr. Han told a press conference, one day after President Clinton wrapped up a two-day visit here.

Mr. Han was replying to a question whether Mr. Clinton's reminder Sunday to thousands of American troops that he personally made the decision to make the June 26 attack on Baghdad was an indirect message to the North.

U.S. President Bill Clinton Sunday visited Panmunjom, the sole crossing point along the heavily-fortified demilitarised zone (DMZ) that divides the South from the North.

A U.N. honour guard received the coffins one by one and draped them with the United Nations flag.

The remains will be transported to the U.S. Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii for verification.

During his visit, which took him within a few metres of the frontier, Mr. Clinton pledged to

"It

Al Ahli Championship begins Thursday

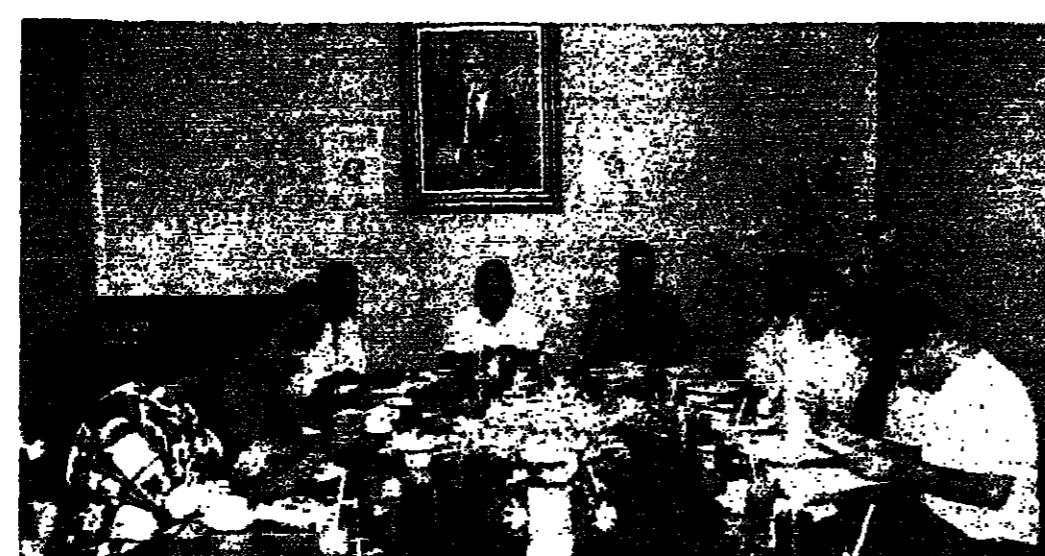
By Ardi

sent to the Jordan Times
AMMAN — Eight top basketball teams will begin competing at the Sports Palace in Amman, Thursday, the Al Ahli International Championships, which is organised by Al Ahli Club here on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

At a press conference held at Al Ahli Club Monday, the club's Vice-President, Mohammad Bazzough, hoped that the tournament will be successful with the participation of top Arab and international teams.

The tournament will be held from July 15-22 and will start at the Sports Palace Court under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein.

The championship has attracted Lebanon's Al Kahra, Romania's Cluj, Syria's Al Wabdah, Algeria's Boufaric, Ukraine's Alekskram, and a team from Tunisia, in addition to Jordan's basketball power houses Al Orthodoxi and the 1992 title-holders Al Ahli.



Al Ahli Club's Vice President Mohammad Bazzough and board member Samir Janakat (centre) brief the press Monday on the Al Ahli International Championships

The two Jordanian teams include most of the country's best players including Al Orthodoxi's Barakat brothers and Jihad Saliba, and Al Ahli's Naser Bushnaq, Walid Badran, and Sameer Murgos.

decided Tunisian team.

Al Ahli will face Kiev's Alekskram in the opening match on Thursday.

Four matches will be held daily and fans can attend the four matches with one ticket.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rusedski wins Hall of Fame title

NEWPORT, Rhode Island (AFP) — Greg Rusedski became the first Canadian to win a professional tournament since the open era began in 1968, defeating Argentina's Javier Frana here Sunday in the final of the Hall of Fame Classic. Unseeded Rusedski defeated the No. 3 seed 7-5, 6-7 (11/9), 7-6 (7/2) to capture the \$25,000 first prize in his only seventh professional tournament. "Before this tournament, I had lost 15 straight tie-breakers in qualifying matches," said the 19-year-old from Montreal. "My coach (Bud Schulz) told me to be more aggressive. That paid off this week." Rusedski, who won eight tie-breakers in the tournament, now passes Chris Pridham to become Canada's top-rated player. "I'm very pleased with the way I came through in tough spots all week long," Rusedski said. "I was going for all my shots." Frana was serving for the match at 5-4 and two points away from the victory in the third set before hitting two straight shots into the net. Rusedski took advantage of his chance, breaking Frana with a backhand.

Skoff wins Swedish Open

BASTAD, Sweden (AP) — Horst Skoff won his first title in nearly three years Sunday, rallying from a 1-6 second-set drubbing to beat Ronald Agenor of Haiti 7-5, 1-6, 6-0 and claim the \$25,000 Swedish Open crown. After routing Skoff in midmatch, Agenor suddenly appeared listless, missing balls he had handled easily in the second. Skoff was very happy to win, and said he would gladly return to Bastad. It was the first ATP Tour victory for the Australian since he won the Barclay Open in Geneva, Switzerland on Sept. 16, 1990, and the fourth in his eight-year pro career. Agenor hasn't won a tournament since the Berlin Open on Oct. 14, 1990. "This was probably my most important victory ever, considering that I was injured most of last year and lost much of my motivation. Now I'll try to make it to 50th position as a first goal," said Skoff, who reached a career high 18th on the ATP Tour computer in 1990.

Bruguera is still the king of clay

GSTAAD, Switzerland (AFP) — French Open champion Sergi Bruguera reconfirmed his status as the world's top clay-court player when he beat Karel Novacek 6-3, 6-4 in the Swiss Open

final. Bruguera, who took a month off after his triumph at Roland Garros in June, had to finish a semifinal and play a final Sunday after a week of poor weather in the Alps. The Spaniard, ranked fifth in the world, mopped up his semifinal against German Marc Goettler 6-3, 6-0 in the morning after the contest resumed at 3-3. Three hours later, the top seed took to the court to face Novacek, whom he had beaten six times in six matches. It was the Spaniard's 15th victory in a row on clay since losing to American Jim Courier in the Italian Open quarterfinals in May. "Today was not easy, I had to get up early. It was start-stop," said Bruguera. "I would much rather have played one match instead of two." Novacek admitted he had no answer for the game of his rival, whose tennis he described as "out of this world."

Bobkova wins Palermo tennis tournament

PALERMO, Italy (AFP) — Radka Bobkova won the \$100,000 Palermo Women's Tennis Tournament after beating top seed Mary Pierce of France 6-3, 6-2 here. The 20-year-old Czech, ranked 64th, proved the better of the Canadian-born champion of the past two years, who made too many unforced errors.

Sudan beats Ethiopia 1-0

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — Sudan's national soccer team defeated Ethiopia 1-0 in the competition for the African Nations Championship finals to be held in Tunis next year. Few people turned out for the game as the Sudanese team chances to reach the finals are very slim. In their first match, Ethiopia won 3-0 in Addis Ababa.

Egypt, Morocco tie 1-1

CAIRO (AP) — Yasser Ezzat scored in the opening minute of the second half Sunday, rallying Egypt to a 1-1 draw with Morocco into an African Cup of Nations qualifying match. The draw increased Egypt's point total to six and left Morocco with only four. The two countries each have a one game remaining with both Mali and Malawi, but Egypt's chances of advancing to next year's finals in Tunisia are better than the other countries in its group. Morocco led in the 22nd minute on a goal by Legressi Abdul Salam. The match was played in the Mediterranean port of Alexandria instead of Cairo.

Indurain wins 9th stage, leads in Tour de France

LAC DE MADINE, France (AFP) — Spain's Miguel Indurain (Banesto) Monday won the ninth stage time trial of the Tour de France cycling race here and has regained the overall lead.

Indurain, hot favourite to win his third Tour de France running, stamped his authority on the race with his time-trial superiority in this 59-km-stage.

Following Tuesday's rest day,

the first of five mountain stages begins in the Alps Wednesday, and provided Indurain can keep losses to a minimum, he could seal victory in the last time-trial on July 24.

Despite a puncture in the closing stages, Indurain pushed world champion Gianni Bugno into second place by 2min 1sec and Dutchman Erik Breukink was 2min 22sec further back. Switzer-

land's Tony Rominger, hampered by the weather and a puncture, conceded 2min 42sec.

Among the other main rivals for overall victory, Switzerland's Alex Zulle lost 3min 18sec, while Italian Claudio Chiappucci lost 5min 18sec. But climbing specialist Chiappucci have five mountain stages to impose himself.

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GOREN BRIDGE
With OMAR SHARIF & TAHNIAH HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦Q753 ♠VKQJ4 ♣AQ8 ♠A83
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦K6 ♠VK107 ♦Q7 ♠AK86532
In first seat, what is your opening bid?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦A3 ♠VKQ10952 ♠Q762 ♦6
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AK9832 ♠A7 01072 ♠K3
Partner opens the bidding with one heart. What do you respond?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦42 ♠J873 ♠KJ754 ♦42
Partner opens the bidding with one spade and the next hand passes. What action do you take?

Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.7—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.8—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.9—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.10—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.11—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.12—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.13—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.14—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.15—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.16—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.17—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.18—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.19—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.20—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.21—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.22—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.23—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.24—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.25—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.26—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.27—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.28—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.29—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.30—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.31—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.32—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.33—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.34—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.35—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.36—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.37—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.38—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.39—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.40—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.41—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.42—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.43—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.44—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.45—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.46—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.47—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.48—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.49—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your left-hand opponent opens the bidding with one club. What action do you take?

Q.50—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQ ♠V3 ♠AQ987 ♠AJ94
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with four hearts. What action do you take?

Q.51—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦

Bosnia calls on Islamic countries to send troops

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Bosnian Foreign Minister Haris Silajdzic called Monday for the urgent dispatch of Islamic troops to his war-torn country while Pakistan demanded an immediate end to the "genocide" of the Muslim population.

Speaking at a two-day conference of 16 Muslim countries opened here by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to coordinate troop deployment in Bosnia's six so-called safe areas, Mr. Silajdzic urged the participants to send "as many troops as possible and as soon as possible."

"This conference is very important. We hope it will produce not only paper but some action this time," he added.

Hamid Al Gabid, secretary-general of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), in his speech stressed that "time is of the essence."

"We cannot afford to let the international community wait for the total capitulation of the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina," he told the delegates.

In view of the "extremely critical" situation, he said it was imperative to arrange an "immediate and durable ceasefire" throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The meeting should explore all avenues to secure such a ceasefire, the OIC chief added.

As well as host Pakistan, foreign ministers or representatives from Egypt, Iran, Senegal, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Uganda, Tunisia, Palestine, Algeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Djibouti, Brunei and Morocco

are attending the meeting.

In his opening address Mr. Sharif called for the adopting of a "specific plan of action" for a just settlement in Bosnia.

"The meeting is not only a test of the Muslim World's resolve to uphold the fundamental rights of the Bosnian Muslims but also to stand by a member of the OIC which is being subjected to aggression and occupation," Mr. Sharif said.

Mr. Silajdzic lashed out at the arms embargo saying that it reflected Europe's "anti-Muslim policy."

He vehemently opposed those who consider the Bosnian conflict a civil war, stressing that his country was "victim of aggression committed by Belgrade."

The foreign minister said some 200,000 civilians had been killed and 1.5 million displaced. "There are concentration camps and rape camps."

"Bosnia is subjected to an organised and systematic destruction."

Some 800 mosques, including some dating back to the 15th and 16th centuries have been destroyed by those hoisting the banner of "might is justice," he said.

All this is being done with the tacit approval from outside under the so-called pretext of maintaining a "neutral" front.

He said people were being "raped, killed and maimed" and the victims are told "we cannot give you arms because it is better for you not to have arms."

He said his country signed a peace plan "invented by the in-

ternational community and abandoned by the international community."

"We are told to enter into negotiations again and start a new Geneva process after 10 months of talks during which tens of thousands were killed."

But he warned that any negotiations without firm guarantees for peace would fail.

Premier Sharif said earlier the U.N. Security Council should once again demand an immediate cessation of hostilities in Bosnia-Herzegovina, subjected to "genocide."

U.N. forces must ensure the uninterrupted flow of humanitarian assistance to the two million population of Bosnia and steps should be taken to ensure full respect for the security of the safe areas, he added.

The meeting would consider provision of troops, finances and heavy equipment for the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) proposed by the Security Council in its June 3 resolution.

The United Nations has decided to deploy the UNPROFOR at six designated "safe areas" of BiHac, Gradijev, Srebrenica, Tuzla, Zepa and Sarajevo.

Pakistan is expected to deploy a brigade comprising some 3,000 soldiers while Bangladesh has also agreed to join the UNPROFOR. Jordan and Egypt have already dispatched small numbers of their troops to Bosnia.

Serbs retake strategic pockets, page 8

Kurds claim kidnap of Briton and Australian

ANKARA (AFP) — A British man and an Australian woman who were missing while cycling through eastern Turkey were kidnapped by Kurdish separatists, but are alive and well, agency reports have confirmed Monday.

Earlier in London the Kurdish Information Centre had said the two were seized by Kurds. The Turkish army recently launched a tough new offensive against the Kurdish rebels who have been waging a guerrilla war in southeastern Turkey for almost a decade.

David Rowbotham and Tania Miller, both 28, who went missing July 5 in the mountainous Tavvan region, were "kidnapped" for "entering Kurdistan without the necessary authorisation," the Kurd-Hiz agency, a virtual mouthpiece for the rebels, said.

The agency said the two tourists — described as "the Australian nurse and the British engineer" — would be freed "as soon as the Turkish army eases its air and ground operations in the mountain region where they were in danger of losing their lives."

Australian officials expressed optimism Monday that they would be released unharmed, while Ms. Miller's mother described the news as the best possible next to the pair's release.

The pair were "in good health," the agency communiqué added, confirming the report Sunday from the Kurdish Information Centre in London.

They had failed to heed warnings from the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) about the "risks of an unauthorized trip in the region where the Turkish army is waging war on Kurds," the communiqué said, citing PKK sources in Beirut.

They were in the hands of the PKK's military wing in Garzan, the agency added.

In Canberra, Australian foreign affairs officials said Monday they were "cautiously optimistic" that the pair would be released unharmed.

"We now believe the PKK claims are probably authentic," a foreign affairs department spokesman said, adding: "We are relieved that the statement said they were both safe and well."

He said embassy staff in Ankara made the assessment after talks with Turkish and British officials.

The tone of the statement indicate they will be released in due course," he said.

Ms. Miller's mother Boreen said at her home in Jimboomba, south of Brisbane, that the news the couple had been kidnapped by Kurds was the best the family could have received, short of their release.

She said the family now knew the cousins were alive and well and had been told the Kurds treated their hostages don't get sick or catch disease," she said.

"We're just hoping they'll be released early. We're hoping they won't be another Terry Waite."

She said she hoped the PKK did not carry out a threat to hold the pair "until the Turkish government stops oppressing the Kurds."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Radioactivity found in Gulf war tanks

KUWAIT (R) — Four Iraqi tanks destroyed by allied missiles during the Gulf war were found to be slightly radioactive but pose no health risk, a Kuwaiti official said on Monday. Rashid Al Owaish, director of the Health Ministry's department of public health, said by telephone the four Iraqi tanks, among hundreds removed from the battlefield, had been destroyed by projectiles tipped with depleted uranium. He said the radiation appeared linked to this but added: "There is absolutely no health risk to the community."

Court date set for pleas on Bahrain-Qatar row

MANAMA (R) — The International Court of Justice will begin next February to hear pleas on Bahrain's challenge to its competence to rule on a territorial dispute with Qatar, Bahrain's Gulf News Agency said. The dispute is over a clutch of islands, reefs and sandbanks that are potentially rich in oil and gas. The news agency quoted an official source in Manama as saying on Sunday the court in The Hague had advised the government of Bahrain of the date for the hearing. The court will not enter into the substance of the dispute when it starts the hearings of Feb. 28, the agency said. It will instead hear arguments from both sides on whether it has the jurisdiction to rule on Qatar's unilateral application to the court to settle the dispute.

Colin Powell decorated by Kuwait's emir

KUWAIT (AP) — The emir of Kuwait on Monday honoured General Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, with a medal for his role in driving Iraqi forces out of the emirate in the Gulf war. Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah awarded Gen. Powell the order of Kuwait in a ceremony at Bayan Palace attended by U.S. Ambassador Edward Gnehim, and Kuwait's chief of staff, Major General Ali Al Momen. General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who commanded the military operation, was given the same medal in 1991.

Algerian desert victims' bodies identified

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian paramilitary police have been able to identify seven of 15 people whose bodies were found near their stranded vehicle in a remote part of the southern desert, officials said Monday. Four Malians, two Algerians and a Senegalese national had been identified, but gendarmes had not yet discovered who the others were, including four children. All the 15, whose badly decomposed bodies were discovered on July 6 at Tamrout Echegaa, 339 kilometres southwest of Tamanrasset in southern Algeria, were believed to be Africans. Police said the casualties, who also included four women and were on their way towards Mali, died of thirst and sunstroke after their vehicle broke down, apparently after the battery went flat.

China building air base in disputed sea

BEIJING (AFP) — China is building a military air base in the disputed South China Sea and is obtaining the necessary hardware to prepare for the possibility of armed conflict there, an official book reported. The military has already bought 24 advanced SU-27 jet fighters and five heavy military transport planes from Russia, according to Military Secrets, a book printed last month by a Public Security Ministry publishing house. China plans to coproduce AN-180s, a medium-range transport plane, with Ukraine and is trying to buy airborne warning systems and missile technology, while developing mid-air refueling capacity, the book said. Efforts to obtain an aircraft carrier were continuing as part of China's "determination" to build up a blue water naval fleet, it said.

German killed, allegedly by Turk

BONN (AFP) — A 25-year-old German has died after being stabbed, allegedly by a Turk who feared the man was trying to break into his family's home in the central town of Wetzlar, police said Monday. Police have arrested four Turkish brothers in connection with the crime which occurred overnight. Police said the German and a friend had stepped on window panes stacked underneath one of the windows and awakened one of the Turks living inside the house, who then chased the Germans, caught one and stabbed him repeatedly. There have been almost daily attempts to set foreigners' homes on fire in Germany since the end of May, when five Turks were killed during a racially motivated arson attack in the town of Solingen.

Israeli workers' strike shuts embassies

TEL AVIV (R) — A strike by government employees for higher pay has shut down Israeli embassies around the world, the foreign ministry said Monday. "All our embassies are closed," a ministry spokesman said. About 600 ministry employees in embassies and consulates began observing the strike on Monday. But Israeli officials said security guards remained on the job and heads of missions were handling urgent business. Nearly all 60,000 Israeli public employees stopped work last Wednesday indefinitely to demand wage increases.



MARCH IN GAZA: Palestinians from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine armed with Kalashnikov march in Shabura refugee camp in Rafah Monday, commemorating the killing four days ago of a comrade Samir Sha'at by the Israeli army (AFP photo)

Settlers challenge Rabin with vow to set up enclave

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (AP)

About 50 Jewish settlers brought a Torah scroll Monday to dedicate a memorial to a slain Israeli and announced plans to establish a new township at the site.

More than an expression of mourning, the protest was a fresh test of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's declared freeze on Jewish settlement building in the occupied territories.

It also showed growing nervousness among settlers about the possibility of a withdrawal from the occupied territories once a treaty is signed with the Palestinians.

The site, on a dusty roadside near Tekoa settlement in the hills surrounding Bethlehem, is where Russian-born settler Mordechai Lipkin, 38, was killed while driving home Thursday night from the nearby Gush Etzion settlement bloc.

Settlers from Tekoa pitched several tents on the rocky hillside nearby after Sunday evening's funeral. It was a small showing compared to past demonstrations, and no government representatives were present.

Following a Talmudic tradition, they also staked up boulders and planted a blue and white Israeli flag on top as a "gal-ed."

On Monday afternoon, Yonin Achiman, council head of the area's largest settlement, Efrat, brought over a red velvet-covered Torah, a holy scroll of the Old Testament, encased in a plain

wooden ark.

Zeev Hever, a settlement leader once imprisoned as a member of a Jewish settler terror underground, kissed the scroll. Nearby two children showed off toy wooden guns to Israeli soldiers.

Then the ceremony got underway. "We have come here to establish a permanent Jewish presence, a Jewish settlement," said Ina Vinavsky, a settlement leader at Tekoa. "We don't intend to go home after the 'Shiva' (seven-day mourning period) like good little children."

She was applauded by the several dozen men, women and children praise also came from the guest of honour, Ariel Sharon of the right-wing Likud Party: "Every effort must be made to find a way ... for a settlement group to remain."

"There has been a weakening in settlement activity and I hope it will be strengthened," Mr. Sharon added.

Mr. Sharon spearheaded the drive that enabled more than 110,000 Jews to move into 144 settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip since 1967. Since taking office a year ago, Mr. Rabin has halted expansion of settlements and took away tax breaks, but permitted the completion of 11,000 housing units under construction.

Shilo, a settlement in the Jordan Valley where 1,000 Jews live, said they would seek government approval to remain.

5 more to hang in Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — President Hosni Mubarak has opened the way for execution of five more convicted Muslim extremists by rejecting their appeals for clemency, a military official said Monday.

The executions would bring to 14 the number of radicals hanged since mid-June, underscoring Egypt's resolve to quell the violent campaign aimed at displacing Mr. Mubarak's secular government.

The pair were "in good health," the agency communiqué added, confirming the report Sunday from the Kurdish Information Centre in London.

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She said she hoped the PKK did not carry out a threat to hold the pair "until the Turkish government stops oppressing the Kurds."

Torture by injection

An Egyptian human rights group has called on the authorities to investigate allegations that a man charged with stealing cars had been "tortured by injection," saying his life was in danger.

In a statement faxed Monday to AFP, the Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) said it had received a complaint from Mohammad Ali Mohammad Ali who claimed he was tortured by the chief investigative officer of Cairo's Agouza police station.

Mr. Ali was arrested in January and charged with car theft.

He claimed, according to the EOHR, that the officer "injected him with contaminated material consisting of a mixture of water and faeces, which eventually caused gangrene in his leg."

The EOHR, describing the method of as "barbaric," demanded that the torture allegations be investigated and that the findings be made public.

The human rights group appealed to the attorney general and interior minister on May 13 demanding that Mr. Ali be given adequate medical care but has not yet received a reply, the statement added.

An EOHR representative visited Mr. Ali at a Cairo hospital in May after he had undergone three operations to remove "contaminated tissue" and graft new tissue to his leg.

He was due to have a fourth operation but he transferred to the Tora prison hospital, south of Cairo, "without receiving the operation and despite the absence of sufficient care for his condition," there, the EOHR added.

They were convicted of attacking foreign tourists and attempting to assassinate Information Minister Safwat Al Sherif. Six of the men were sentenced to death, but one was tried in absentia and is at large. The others got long

Israeli party endorses Palestinian sovereignty in E. Jerusalem

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP)

A new party running in Jerusalem's municipal elections in November advocates Palestinian sovereignty over the eastern sector of the city, its Israeli founder said Monday.

The party, "For the Sake of Jerusalem," has asked the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to endorse it and urge Palestinians in East Jerusalem to vote for it, said founder Moshe Amirav, a city council member.

The 150,000 Palestinians living in East Jerusalem have never participated in Jerusalem's municipal elections, saying it would be tantamount to recognising Israeli rule.

Mr. Amirav said surveys showed that it was very likely the candidate of the right-wing Likud Party, former Health Minister Ehud Olmert, would defeat incumbent Teddy Kollek, 83, unless the 60,000 eligible Palestinian voters ended their boycott.

"We are talking about the power of the Palestinians to dictate who will be ruling the city," Mr. Amirav said.

Mr. Amirav said he and city council member Sarah Kaminker